VICTORIOUS MANHOOD

HOWARD AGNEW JOHNSTON

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VICTORIOUS MANHOOD

HOWARD AGNEW JOHNSTON

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Victorious Manhood

By
HOWARD AGNEW JOHNSTON

With a Foreword
By IRA LANDRITH, D.D., LL. D.

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FOREWORD

THE manliest of all men is the man who sincerely accepts and consistently serves the Man of Galilee.

No religion that tends to unman a man is worthy to be called Christian. Created after the Maker's own likeness, and by the Creator Himself pronounced good, it is past the reach of imagination that any man should suffer a loss of manhood or a marring of the divine image, merely because he follows in the footsteps of the perfect Second Adam, the Man Christ Jesus.

Then whatever in a man is essentially manly is Christian, and anything that is not Christian is not manly. Integrity, philanthropy, industry and strength—these are manly virtues, and all are distinctively Christian. Dishonesty, impurity, selfishness, and weakness are unmanly vices, every one of which Christ disowned by both conduct and counsel.

Every virtue—like charity, like liberality,

like honesty—of which the godless boast, and which they widely proclaim as characteristics of certain of their number who have become prominent as lawbreakers, or as leaders in such iniquitous employment as the liquor traffic or gambling, are merely Christian virtues, possessed and manifested in far greater degree by thousands of Christian men who neither herald their worthy deeds nor prate about their good hearts. True worth is never immodest, and immodesty is never truly worthy. Manhood, full grown, stainless, unpurchasable, sincerely devout, does not need to advertise.

When the whole Gospel is preached in the full, round voice and with the equally well-rounded manhood of a masculine ministry, men everywhere are going to crowd our churches; for then the truth will be known that to be a Christian is to be the highest type of man, and to be in all respects a man is to be a Christian.

Then we shall be done with any mere sentimentalism that whimsically masquerades as religion; then we shall have no

more preaching that, because it is aimed at vacuity, seldom misses the mark; then the pretty pink-tea type of church activity that neither materially helps the right nor hinders the wrong will give place to a vital, virile, irresistible, indefatigable crusade for the weal of the Church and of those whom the Church ought to reach and aid, the while that this same crusade insures the woe of all those institutions and enterprises that are set to retard the progress of the kingdom at home and abroad.

That great day of masculine morality, of self-respecting and respect-compelling, because robust, Christianity, has almost fully come; and the future of Christianity is accordingly hopeful and bright.

Already we are hearing of revivals, Pentecostal in power and more than Pentecostal in proportions. The rumbling of crumbling structures of public iniquity is heard in the land. Organized and arrogant vice is pleading for its life at the hands of righteously outraged Christian manhood, from the capital of the nation to the humblest county seat. Lawbreakers, promi-

nent and opulent lawbreakers, who have long felt confident in their complacent immunity, are now busy defending themselves, or hiding from the sunlight, or shrewdly assuming virtues they never possessed.

Men in all walks of life are turning to Christ to-day with the unmistakable look of weariness on their faces—tired of scepticism and tired of the hopeless struggle for contentment outside of the presence of Him whose invitation to all the weary and laden is coupled with the promise, "Come unto Me, and I will give you rest." A sane, sincere, simple appeal to unsaved men is nowadays seldom fruitless, whether that appeal be to individuals or to the multitude. Evangelistic meetings for men only were never so plentiful nor so popular, and all because men are more easily reached with the strong meat of the whole Gospel than are women, much as we have said—and we have said too much—from our pulpits about superior feminine piety.

Mission work on the shadowy side of the earth, too, is, of late, having a healthy re-

vival. Men in increasing numbers are going thither to work, and other men are going sympathetically to watch the workers. Consequently, we are hearing more of sensible truth and less of sentimental twaddle about foreign missions, with the wholesome result that the Church has decided that the work of world-evangelization is possible, and that it must, therefore, be undertaken on a scale large enough to insure early success. Men are seeing at last that it is their task, the task of the men who do things worth doing in the business world, to preach the Gospel to every creature and that the enterprise is vast enough to challenge their highest ambition and to engage their largest talents. Herein lies our hope of the speedy triumph of the Cross.

The thoughtful onlooker, too, has had somewhat to do with the modern revival of men's concern for Christianity. He has heard our long-continued preaching in behalf of uprightness, evangelistic zeal and missionary conquest, until he has begun to challenge us to practice what we preach; and the Church simply had to accept the

challenge. This is but one of many reasons why church-membership means more than it used to mean, and why personal work for unbelievers is becoming the rule where of old it was a sort of revival meeting exception. Men led each other astray, and, as a rule, the most potent influence for bringing straying men back to God is a masculine hand directed by a manly heart.

These are some of the things for which the modern men's movement in and among the churches stands; and these are a few of the themes which this man's man, the author of "Victorious Manhood," is so masterfully treating. In these pages we are rightly taught that the only true measure of manhood is Jesus Christ; that to live the Christlike life is manhood's supreme meaning; that the marring of manhood is due to lack of dependence upon God and is a blasphemous crime against the Maker; and that the making of manhood is impossible without both human and divine power, without the Spirit of God and the heroic will and work of the man and his friends, to the end that the image

of Christ may be reproduced. The author shows us the way to the privilege of sonship in Christ and friendship with Christ; and among other marks of manhood urges upon us the importance of the spirit of surrender to Christ and indicates how we must show the fruits of this spirit through stewardship, soldiership, and service, through the bearing of hardship, and specifically through personal work for the salvation of other men. Here our author has the right, which, of course, he does not claim, to speak as a specialist, to counsel with us as an expert, a master. The book is all eminently worth while, but the division devoted to "The Spirit of the Soul-Winner" as a mark of manhood is alone worth more than the whole of many another much more pretentious volume. The climax in the making of manhood, the highest mark in the process, is presented in the concluding discourse on "The Spirit of the Saint," a too-often unreached but never unattainable joy of our salvation.

Such discourses to men and concerning manhood deserve a larger audience than

one church building could accommodate; and it is gratifying that the man in the pulpit of the First Presbyterian Church has yielded to the request of the men of Colorado Springs, and has given to the men of America this call for Victorious Manhood through the Man of Galilee.

IRA LANDRITH.

Victorious Manhood

I

THE MEASURE OF MANHOOD

THE most vital and positive thing in human living is to have Jesus Christ a vivid reality in the daily thinking of the individual man. And the most constructive factor in the building of character is to have this sense of the personal Christ as our workable and working ideal. A man's appreciation of the unattained is the measure of his ideal. And his actual conviction concerning the attainable is the constant inspiration which beckons and constrains towards higher levels of life. It is because He realizes to honest men the motive and the power for such attainment that Jesus Christ is proving to be the Saviour of the world. Such men find in Him reality and the invitation to share it. They find in Him virility and the

assurance that they may possess it. They find in Him a strength that loves to serve and the challenge to develop it. They find in Him the splendour of the noblest victory in manhood known to human history and the promise that they may realize it with increasing fullness. But to find all this and more in Him means that in Christ we have presented to us the standard of true manhood, the vision of that unto which we may hope to attain. The vision is the first essential to the realization of any ideal. Without it there can be no clear purpose. The soul without such purpose is like a feather floating on the breeze; while with it that soul is as an arrow speeding towards its mark. There it shines in "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

But when we look about us at the standards which so many people have set for themselves, we find it difficult to believe that men possessing all the endowments which are native to the human soul have come to such levels of perverted judgment and such distorted estimates of true values

as to strive after ends so utterly unworthy of their possibilities and powers, so far below God's high thought for us all. Think for a moment of some of these various objectives of men, even though they live in a land like our own filled with the evidences of a true and victorious manhood.

Some men measure manhood by millinery. This seems too superficial to demand even passing attention; and yet many young men are giving more time and thought to the subject of their clothes than to the subject of their eternal destiny. Early one morning a friend was standing on the palisades overlooking the Hudson, profoundly stirred by the glories of the scene, and unaware of the approach of another. Upon hearing a step at his side, he turned and discovered a young man approaching, to whom he exclaimed: "Is it not beautiful!" Very consciously the young man adjusted his necktie, replying: "I am so glad you like it." Now there is a place for the consideration of clothes. Carlyle has developed a philosophy of clothes, and some one has said "The clothes make

the man"; but the phrase betrays a very superficial estimate of values in human life. A man's dress is an index to certain things in his life, and he should be thoughtful about his personal appearance; but clothes after all have only a relative value.

Some men measure manhood by muscle. To them life is all in the realm of the physical and earthy. Occasionally, the daily papers give pages of an elaborate report to the latest pugilistic contest, and thousands devour the reports. That is life to them. As a matter of fact that, without anything more, is not life. It is death. But it is on that level that they exist here for a time, if it be scarcely proper to speak of them as living. Many of them see only the animal side in human relationships. If gifted with qualities of intellect and heart, all such endowments are unhesitatingly subsidized to satisfy their desires on the level of the flesh. Now there is a place for a splendid physical constitution, for athletics and the cultivation of a strong and healthy body as the basis of a vigorous life of the intellect or the spirit; and yet to ex-

alt this phase of life to the first place is to become degraded to the level of the animal. Valuable as physical strength undoubtedly is, the fact remains that some of the world's benefactors have been men of frail bodies, and some of the noblest souls known to history have lived through years of physical weakness. Build a strong physical manhood; but remember that it is only the scaffolding upon which to climb to build something far nobler and far more abiding. All this only waits to be poured into the dust of the grave.

Some men measure manhood by manners. They have an idea that the outward forms of politeness make the gentleman. They are all too easily deceived with the notion that reality is only veneer. They may mask black hearts under the pleasing exterior, and somehow have an idea that men ought not to condemn their conduct because they are so polite in their impurity or dishonesty. Now our Lord loved the amenities of life. He missed the courtesies usually extended to a guest in His day; but He despised shams, as every honest

man does. We may not fail to cultivate the spirit of thoughtful courtesy and kindly attention; but these must reveal a deep element of unselfish and hearty concern for the people among whom we go. Otherwise, it will not be long before the insincerity of the heart will betray its superficial life to those who know it best. There must be something more than manners to make the man.

Some men measure manhood by money. They really believe that a man should be measured by his ability to make money. Their standard does not take into account the way he may use it; but the fact that he has secured it, even though by uncertain methods, is enough to exalt him in their esteem. It is an index to much of our thinking to have most people, when you ask them how much a certain man is worth, immediately think of how much money he is supposed to possess. It has been this deep-seated idea that has held men through the centuries to a money value. It is at the heart of the labour problem to-day. It was at the heart of

that custom that sold a man on the block for the money that he would bring. It is a terrible perversion of God's truth concerning the worth of an immortal life. Now we realize that money has its true value. We are not attempting to minimize the need of securing all that any man can honestly obtain; but unless he obtain it and use it in the spirit of faithful stewardship, though he should amass enough to fill his grave with gold, he has missed the abiding riches that money can never buy.

Some men measure manhood by military genius. Through centuries of human history the world's hero has been the conqueror on the field of battle, where human lives have been sacrificed all too often for some unworthy object, some selfish ambition for extending dominion, some hasty vengeance because of conduct that has been magnified into a pretext intended to justify war. But that day is passing. No longer is the life of the soldier put in the first place. There have been battles fought for humanity and for truth, and there yet may be occasion for them; but the whole

world is rapidly coming to pray that the days of war shall cease. David could not build the temple of God because he was a man of war, a man of blood. God's first plan for the building of His kingdom is never by the sword. He will overrule the wrath of men to His own praise, and to the ultimate advancement of His cause; but He seeks "peace on earth" in the expressions of good will among men.

Some men measure manhood by music. The world of art or æsthetics is all the world to them. And there has developed among these devotees to this expression of life an idea that they ought not to be held responsible for their immoralities as some others should be. Their artistic temperaments are supposed to justify their lust, or their deliberate violation of the laws of good society. But it is evident on the face of it that the superior gifts which these people possess are an added ground for higher ideals and nobler practices than might be expected of some who have never been given the vision of beauty

which is so closely related to the deeper experiences of the soul.

Some men measure manhood by mind. It is indeed a magnificent thing to run the gamut of the world's thought with mastery, to know its history, its science, its philosophy, its poetry, its sweep of literary achievement. This is life to some, who care little for aught else within their reach. Yet every man who finds more light shining upon his pathway is facing greater condemnation if he should sin against that light, either by neglect or by willful disobedience. The fact is written into history that pride of intellect has been the fatal hindrance in the life of many men, who otherwise might have enriched their natures in the realm of human affection revealed in the purpose to minister to human need.

Some men measure manhood by morals. Here again we are on a high plane. It is splendid indeed to fix one's standard at the point of purity of individual life, of fidelity in the home, of actual integrity in commercial affairs, of faithful citizenship in the life

of the community, and unselfish generosity in helping the needy objects that press upon us in the misfortunes of our neighbours. But all this only rises to the level of man's earthly relationships. There is light upon the problem of human life which shines from a higher point than this.

Some men measure manhood by the man Christ Jesus. And the supreme fact in this measure of life is that it finds its meaning in the relation which it reveals to the living God. Jesus Christ gives men a vision of the possibilities of human life when it is filled and made glorious by the indwelling life of God. The whole life of Christ is a revelation to men of what God has made possible for a man to become. The highest and noblest endowments of the human soul take on meaning because they can only be realized as man discovers his possibilities of fellowship with the Father of all human spirits, and enters into that real and personal communion with God which relates all life to Him, to His plan, to His will, to His ultimate welcome into the larger fellowship which waits for

all who see the real values and possibilities in this life, and seek with unswerving purpose to realize them here and now.

Let us think of the way that God is leading men along the line of this vision. Revelation means to draw back the veil. And it is clear that every time God reveals something more of Himself to men, He is just enabling men to realize more clearly that He has made our capacity by so much greater than we had known, and has made greater power available for us as well. Every new discovery in science is not only a further revelation of the thought of God; but is also a new discovery concerning the power of man to enter into the life of God more fully. Every new creation of man in the realm of invention is but another emphasis of the fact that God has made us labourers together with Him, even fellow creators with Him. Every advance step in the mastery of the earth or sea or power of the air is but another manifestation of what it means that man is made in the image of God. And all this is light upon the real measure of manhood.

Beyond all this, Jesus Christ reveals the supreme glory of human life in the realm of moral and spiritual power. Here also the law already noted obtains. Christ reveals the quality of the character of God with the direct purpose of giving to men a realization of God's plan that every man shall grow up into this quality of character, and in so doing come to know an actual fellowship with God. "This is life eternal to know the only true God"; but this can only be done by knowing Jesus Christ in whom He is revealed. It is not possible for man to conceive of a more perfect character than that of Jesus Christ. The verdict of history is clear as to this. But that must mean that God's life is manifest to men in this Christ-life. He lived the human life at its fullest and richest measure of expression. His daily living is the unerasable evidence that man may be filled with the very life of God unto victorious manhood. But let us not mistake the heart of that victory. It is true that Christ towers above the thinking of men because His philosophy of life is the most profound

application of eternal truth to the daily, simple affairs of the home, the school, the shop, and the forum. But all through the years the race has known that the distinctive fact in the life of Christ is His victory over sin, is His holy and wholesome walk among men, in which His purity of thought, His strength of unselfish love, His absolute fidelity to the will of His Father in heaven, kept ever shining out before the eyes of men. This is the goal to which He summons us.

This measure of manhood in Christ invites and challenges us to seek its realization in increasing fullness here in the earthly life; but its reach is unto the unending days. The enlarging nature of man is ever restive when subjected to confinement. Even to live in the midst of constant delights becomes irksome, if we know we cannot go elsewhere. The soul of man leaps out to follow the boundless sweep of the ocean, glories in the endless reach of the unnumbered stars. It is the immortal man answering to the call of the mighty God who dominates seas and stars.

Man was made to grow into the realization of God's life in the developments of time and eternity, and this is the true fellowship with God now and forever. It is in this vision of God's plan for men that we find the true measure of manhood. Is it yours? Have you caught the Vision? Or have you been shutting out the light from the eye of your soul, absorbed in the satisfaction of the lower desires and ambitions of the flesh? Oh, men, with natures intended to rise to the highest and best, let us strive for the full-grown manhood in Jesus Christ; for in Him, and in Him alone, is life made victorious and complete.

II

THE MEANING OF MANHOOD

IN his "Data of Ethics" Mr. Herbert Spencer emphasized the fact that we are accustomed to call anything a success or a failure according as that thing realizes what the form of its construction shows that its maker intended it to be or to do. For instance, an umbrella shows from its form of construction that its maker intended it to keep off the rain. It might be possible to put an umbrella to other uses; but whatever else one might do with it, we will agree that if it should fail to keep off the rain, it is a failure as an umbrella. So a knife shows clearly that its maker intended it to cut. Possibly it might be put to other uses; but if it should fail to cut it is a failure as a knife.

In order therefore to discover the meaning of manhood, our first question must be: What did his Maker intend man to be, judging from the form of construction

of man as a human being, body, mind, and spirit? The fact that man is the last of all created things upon earth is of itself the evidence that he is the crown of creation and that all else has been a preparation for him. The Genesis record contains a suggestive distinction in the creation story, to which Professor Dana, of Yale University, in his "Genesis and Science," calls attention. There we read that in creating the lower forms of life, God used this expression: "Let the earth bring forth," or "Let the waters bring forth"; but when we read of the creation of man, we are told that God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over all creatures below man." When God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of God's own life, man became a living soul, lifted above the level of created *things* into the place of a *child* of God, the Father of our immortal spirits. Therefore kinship with the spiritual nature of the living God is the mark upon the human constitution, written into the very fibre of the immortal soul of every man.

Prof. George Mivart has said that man is as far above the ape as the ape is above the blade of grass. Think of this. The average capacity of the human brain is ninety cubic inches. Forms of human intelligence have brain capacity as low as the seventies. Below seventy one finds the idiot. Yet the highest brain capacity of the anthropoid ape is thirty-five cubic inches. Prof. John Fiske declared that we must divide the whole created universe into two classes, putting man on one side and all the rest on the other. In our first chapter we considered somewhat this unique endowment of man at the hand of God, and the fact that the measure of manhood is nothing less than the fullness of development of the very qualities revealed in God's own life as made manifest in the life of Jesus Christ. Professor Fiske has also declared that "the stupendous momentum of the cosmic forces has all along been tending towards the spiritual perfection of humanity." This is the fact to be kept in mind as we note the teaching of the Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Romans, that

the destiny which God has had for us from the beginning He never lost sight of for a moment, namely, that we should develop all the possibilities with which He has endowed us until we come to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

Recalling the thought of the maker's purpose for anything being evident in its form of construction, let us imagine three or four machines all having several features alike, all running on wheels, all pulled by horses; but each one has a distinctive feature of its own which marks it off from the rest. This one has a knife peculiar to itself, and it is evident that its maker intended its special activity to be in connection with that knife, in the cutting of grain. Another has a rake as its distinctive feature, and it is equally evident that its maker intended its special activity to be in the use of that rake. Now let us apply this principle to man. Immediately we discover that while man has some things in common with the lower forms of animal life on the level of the physical, or the sentient, or the psychical; yet man's distinctive en-

dowment lifts him far above the levels just mentioned to that of the moral and spiritual, and the meaning of manhood is found in the clear purpose of our God that we shall live our life on that high level as the children of the King immortal and eternal.

What then is true success for a man? The Apostle John teaches us in his third letter that whatever prosperity a man may have in the way of physical health or material wealth counts for his true success only in proportion as it tends to his spiritual prosperity. A millionaire may be a physical giant; but his soul may be sin-sick and utterly bankrupt in the priceless riches of character. The Apostle John makes it clear that God desires us to have physical health, not as an end in itself, but to be used as a tool with which to build a victorious manhood, and that God desires us to prosper in material affairs only in so far as we ask ourselves how we may use these elements of power to advance the cause of righteousness in the earth. It is only as God counts a man's life a success that he has truly found prosperity.

Therefore, though men may call him a success because he has amassed much money, or because he has attained a leading social position, though they may call him a success because he has revealed great mastery as an intellectual genius, or as having realized a dominant place in the political world, however high he may write his name upon the scroll of human fame; unless he shall make all these things stepping-stones upon which to climb to the level of the soul's unfolding and enriching in making his life count for the advancement of the kingdom of God among men; then across all that may be said about his earthly achievements, you must write these words: "*But he was a failure as an immortal soul!*"

As we have already noted, this does not mean that man is to be an ascetic. Christ at the wedding at Cana, and in His parable of the welcome feast to the returning prodigal, and in His presence at other social gatherings, gave full place for social pleasures among men. But He earnestly taught that these things of themselves can

never satisfy the immortal soul. Only life, not mere things, can ever satisfy the soul of man. Especially is this true when man is fronted with the problem of sin, and the product of sin. He knows the touch of death is upon him because of his sin, and that the slavery of this sin is the clutch of death upon his soul. Hence the significance of that word "regeneration," for it betokens new life from the only source of life. It is the restlessness of the soul enslaved by sin, which can never be satisfied until it rests in God, because He is the God of life. It is the vision of life, the faith in God's gift of life through Jesus Christ, the repentance that turns from sin and death unto life; it is all this that constitutes the reality of the redemption back to that image in which God created man, and into which He intends that man shall grow.

It is when a man catches the vision of what manhood means for him as an immortal soul, and sees something of the enriched, ennobled, enlarged, enraptured life that rises into fellowship with God in Jesus Christ, that he makes that choice for real

life which is the great act of the human will as it bows in obedience and gratitude before the will of God. For he realizes that the will of God intends only the richest blessings for men, and that nothing less than the purpose to realize the will of God is worthy of any man who has once caught the vision of the life which God has purposed for us all. Man has come to see, when he takes this stand, that God only has the right to rule because He only rules in righteousness, and therefore the product of His rule is always and only blessing.

But this at once leads to the recognition that among men only the godlike have a right to rule. This applies to the individual and also to the community. Only the godly have the right to rule in my life as an individual man. Sin has no right to rule in any man's life. It is a usurper, if it be given place on the throne of any soul. The pure must rule the base, the true must rule the false, the Christ-spirit must ever rule over the spirit of self. And the same law must win its way in solving all the problems of society. Only the godly should

rule in all our community affairs. It is thus that the kingdom of God will come into our lives as individuals and as communities.

It is apparent that in the emphasis of this great law we at once move out into the larger meaning of manhood. We talk about being good citizens. It is a part of the plan of God for every man. He has made His will clear that each one of us shall be a redemptive force in the world. As we seek health, with God's blessing in it, we must ever ask how we may use it to hasten the day when all men shall possess that buoyancy of spiritual health which is the joy of eternal life. As we seek material wealth, with God's blessing in it, we must ever ask how we may use it to enrich the lives of our fellow men who are in need of the pearl of great price, enduring forever into that world where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves cannot break through and steal. As we seek knowledge, with God's blessing in it, we must ever ask how we may help to carry the light of the Gospel of the Son of

God into the darkness of sin and death, thus bringing all to the truth that makes men free. As we seek social influence, with God's blessing in it, we must ever ask how we may exert that influence so as always to make it easier for every life we touch to live close to Christ, and never make it easier for that life to forget and wander away from Him. As we seek political place, with God's blessing in it, we must ever ask how we may be used of God so as to hasten the social redemption of mankind, until nations shall be truly blessed, because God everywhere is their Lord.

Something like this is the meaning of manhood. And we may sum it all up in those words of the Apostle Paul when he said: "For me to live is Christ." Christ is at once the measure of manhood and the meaning of manhood, unfolding to us both the highest possibilities of individual growth and the largest possibilities of social redemption. It is God's purpose that we shall be conformed to the image of Christ. The ideal life is that in which Christ is the pith of every thought, Christ the wing of

every word, Christ the spring of every action, Christ the pole of the heart, Christ the goal of the life; until the rule of our living shall be to go to Christ with everything, to go from Christ to everything, to live face to face with Christ in everything, until Christ shall be all and in all to the soul.

III

THE MARRING OF MANHOOD

I ONCE visited the great establishment of Sévres, just outside of the city of Paris. As we entered the room of the potter he was placing a piece of clay upon the wheel. Carefully he manipulated it a moment, then turned on the power, and the wheel began to spin around with great rapidity. Deftly the potter shaped his clay, now pressing at a point without, now pressing at a point within, shaping the vessel according to a pattern that was evidently clearly in his mind. When the task was finished, the wheel was stopped, and the potter placed the completed vessel on a shelf where there were several exactly like it. Manifestly his first thought for that piece of clay had been realized.

Then he took another piece of clay, placing it upon the wheel as before, evidently planning to produce a vessel just like the first; but he had scarcely begun his task

of manipulation, when suddenly some hard substance protruded from the clay, and "the clay was marred in the hands of the potter." The wheel was stopped while the potter carefully removed the unwelcome element and studied the remaining clay with even more care than he had considered it at first. Then the wheel was started again, and our curiosity was excited to see what the potter would now do. Not long did we wait, for the clay soon took on a shape quite different from that first intended when the clay was marred; and the potter "made it again, another vessel, as it seemed good to him to make it." When it was finished, he did not place it with those on the shelf first noticed; but placed it on quite a different shelf, where were all sorts of vessels in sizes and shapes. It was very evident that if these vessels could speak, they would have said: "We are made of clay that was marred in the hands of the potter. So he did the best he could with us, after that which marred us had been taken away." And some of them were beautiful and useful.

You will remember the story of Israel's history, illustrated by the words of the prophet Jeremiah. God had a first plan for Israel, which was full of blessings for His people; but Israel had been unthankful, selfish, disobedient, idolatrous, and had gone away from God in sin. The clay had been marred in the hands of the potter. Yet God did not cast them utterly away; but planned for their restoration, planned to give them still another opportunity to be His people, through whom He would give the Messiah to the world. Yet it was not enough to give them this further opportunity, for Israel loved to go off in sin and to forget God. So that God must needs plead with them to return.

We recognize it also as the picture of the human race from the beginning. In our two previous chapters we noted God's first plan for man as His child, the marvellous possibilities to be found in the full measure of manhood, and the great blessings that follow when men realize the meaning of manhood and strive to work out the will of God for them. But the Apostle Paul has

pictured for us, in his letter to the Romans, man's pitiful failure to recognize God's way as the way of success and blessing. As Paul said, "They honoured Him not as God, neither were thankful." Self pushed its way to God's throne and the vain imaginations of men refused the wise and loving commandments of God, and the foolish heart of humanity was darkened. The pages of history are stained with blood and tears from the beginning because of man's folly and sin.

The secret of this failure is to be found in man's foolish pride in supposing that he could get along without God, solve his own problems, and win his own victories. A few months ago, a Japanese student said to a Christian missionary in Nagasaki: "Our books on ethics tell us we ought to be honest and pure and unselfish. We know well enough that we ought to live such lives; but our books tell us nothing about where to get the power to live thus." That is the fatal fact about all human wisdom. It does not possess the power to conquer sin and rise to a victorious manhood and woman-

hood. We need not go far to realize that fact, for each of us has proved it many times in his own life. Every living man who is attempting to conquer sin in his own weakness has failed, and knows it well, and will fail unto the end, unless he shall find help above himself. Yet we go on deceiving ourselves in supposing that we can win alone.

We have a most striking illustration of this truth in the realm of science. Down on the level of the mineral kingdom we have the dead dirt, the inert sod, the senseless rock, utterly unable to lift itself above itself. Unless some power above it shall touch it with ability it can never know of itself, it will always remain at the level of the mineral. But on a higher level above it is the vegetable kingdom, with power superior to that of the mineral, and the vegetable reaches down to the mineral, touching it with the power of life, and it is quickened out of the inanimate dirt into the organic plant. It is born anew from above. It is no longer mineral; but is henceforth vegetable, a living thing. But the vege-

table in its turn is just as helpless to lift itself above itself. It too must be born again from above, if it is ever to be anything higher. And above it is the animal kingdom, from whence the animal reaches down and takes up the vegetable into itself, changing it into blood and bone and muscle. It is born again into the kingdom above. At the top of the animal kingdom is man, held to the limitations of human power, utterly unable to lift himself above himself. Not until the divine reaches down with regenerating power is there any hope of man ever rising above the level of the human. But when the Spirit of the living God reaches down and touches the believing soul, then man is born again from above into the kingdom of heaven. Henceforth he is no longer simply a man, doomed to the inability of the degenerate soul; but the touch of God is upon him, he is lifted into the Sonship of God in Jesus Christ.

All history is but the story of man's inability to rise above the level where sin makes us slaves. Yonder in Athens, more than two thousand years ago, man reached

as high a level in intellectual superiority, in athletics, in æsthetics, in all the phases of self-culture; but then, and ever since, man lacked the moral and spiritual power to realize the victory over sin, and Greece fell, as Rome fell, and as every nation will fall which seeks to solve the problem of mankind without the grace of God. It is pathetic indeed to read the cry of despair uttered by the men who had climbed as high as man can climb in his own strength. Cicero gathered up the fruit of Greek knowledge and rose to the heights of Roman life at its best, and he wrote in his "De Legibus": "We talk as if all the miseries of men were comprehended in death, pain of body and sorrow of mind; but the sting of conscience, the remorse of guilt is in itself the greatest evil." A desolating fatalism filled the popular mind. Zeno and Cleanthes both committed suicide, and Seneca wrote: "Seest thou thy throat, thy heart? they are the way of escape from bondage!" then took poison and opened his veins, crying, "Ah, if one might only have a guide to truth!" Such was the

wreck to which humanity at its best had come and such was their philosophy of despair, because men, as the Apostle Paul has said, were "without God and therefore without hope in the world." We do not often enough consider the utter despair of humanity, when men attempt to get along without God, so far as the realization of manhood in its only true victory is concerned.

This emphasis should be made at the point of realizing that the most pitiful of all wrecks occurs when a man of brilliant attainment sins against light, turns his back on God, and goes down at last a slave to sin, whose wages is death as surely in such a life as in any other. One of our poets has described such a man, gifted as few men have been with poetic genius and delightful manners; but who missed the true meaning of manhood. The disease of sin claimed him, both body and soul.

"As some ill-guided barque, well built and tall,
Which angry tides cast out on desert shore,
And then, retiring, left it there to rot
And moulder in the winds and rains of heaven,
So he, cut out from the sympathies of life,

And cast ashore from pleasure's boisterous surge,
A wandering, weary, worn and wretched thing,
A scorched and desolate and blasted soul,
A gloomy wilderness of dying thought,
Repined and groaned and withered from the earth."

There is another important fact to be noted here. There is an expression common among us which conveys a wrong idea. We speak of breaking the laws of God: but man cannot break God's laws. They are the expression of God Himself, and He is in them forever. When we disobey the law of God, the result is that we break our own lives, our own characters at that point. For instance, we cannot break God's law of health. It remains eternally impregnable. What we do when we disobey that law is to break our health. We speak of a man having broken health, and this is exactly correct. Just so, if you disobey God's law of purity, the result is that you have blighted your purity, you have broken your own character at the point of its purity. This is the tremendous fact to be emphasized whenever man fails to realize God's plan for us. It is a case of sui-

cide on the sinner's part, suicide physical, moral, spiritual. And all this applies to each one of us in our daily living, according as we are failing to enter into the will of God for us to possess the blessings which He offers to all who love His commandments to do them.

Returning now to the figure of the potter and the clay, let us note the blessed fact that though the clay is marred, it is still in the potter's hands. He has not yet cast us away. We still have an opportunity to be renewed in the whole man after the image of Jesus Christ, if we wish it. This is the glory of the love of God for sinful men. He is eager to make us new creatures in Christ Jesus, if only we are willing to be as clay in the hands of the potter. George Macdonald represents one of his characters, who had suffered many hardships and was growing bitter against God, as exclaiming in anger: "Oh, I would to God I had never been made!" Then a friend said to her: "Why, you are not made yet; you are only being made, and you are quarrelling with God's proc-

esses." Dear reader, is it not so with us sometimes? But God knows best, and the wheel of the divine Potter is turning, and He is making again the marred clay, doing the very best possible with the material He finds. We shall consider this making of manhood in our next chapter.

One more thought we must emphasize at this time, in connection with God's plan for the marred vessel. He is making us over again in order that He may use us. The great test of the true quality of a Christian life is this—Is God using that life? Is it evident to his fellow men that God is using a man? A gentleman in passing through a factory famous for its manufacture of a very costly china came to a room where a cup beautifully painted and highly burnished with gold attracted his attention. He expressed the opinion that its value must be very great, but the manager replied that while it belonged to a very costly set, careful examination by an expert betrayed a flaw in it, so that it was worthless. The gentleman took it in his hand, carefully examined it, and said it

looked perfect to him. The manager said that if he were to put hot water in it, it would at once prove worthless for the purpose for which it was intended. It could not be used as its maker intended to use it. So is it with us all too often. Men may not see the flaw. It may be some secret defect not apparent to human eyes; but God has noted it, and He cannot use us because it is there.

Our last thought is in the word of the prophet Jeremiah to Israel, where he represents God as saying: "Oh, house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter?" He is asking us the same question. Most of us would not hesitate to say: "Yes, Lord, Thou art able. Thou hast the power." Then I think He changes the form of the question, and He says to us each one: "*May* I then do with you as this potter?" Ah, what shall be our answer to that question? Shall we not say:—

"In Thy strong hand I lay me down;
So shall the work be done.
For who can work so wondrously
As the Almighty One?

"Work on then, Lord, till on my soul
Eternal light shall break;
And in Thy likeness perfected
I satisfied shall wake."

IV

THE MAKING OF MANHOOD

IN one of his brilliant essays John Ruskin gives us a striking illustration of the possibilities of transformation from something lower to something higher. If you take a handful of mud from the roadside and analyze it, you will find it to consist of four elements: clay, sand, soot, and water. From that handful of mud you might gather the particles of clay and let it be purified until it is white and beautiful, and then subject it to the congealing flame until you produce a delicate porcelain to decorate the palace of a king. Or you might allow it to pass through the process of crystallization to which it is susceptible until it gathers out of the sunbeam its blue ray, and then we call it a sapphire. Then you could take the sand, and it too will become white and hard under the sun until it develops the

same marvellous process, gathering into itself not only the blue ray from the sunbeam, but also its red and green and purple in mingled flashes of glory; and then we call it an opal.

Next you turn to the sooty carbon, which looks discouraging indeed. But wait: give it time, and it will whiten and harden and crystallize more perfectly than all the rest, slowly but surely drawing into itself all of the varied colours of the prism, blending them into that shimmering flash of beautiful splendour that we call a diamond. Last of all, you may take the water, and it will crystallize into a spotless star of snow. Such are the possibilities that inhere in a handful of mud at the roadside of transformation from something lower to something higher. And you have already anticipated the thought which inevitably follows: What then must be the possibilities from something lower to something higher which inhere in the capacities of an immortal soul!

There are two fundamental facts to be emphasized in the making of manhood.

The first points us to the supreme glory of character which is revealed in Jesus Christ. The second tells us that there is a process of transformation according to which *every living man may be changed* from the most degraded condition until he shall grow to be more and more like this same Christ. In former chapters we have considered the first of these two thoughts. We have noted that beyond the glory of the landscape, beyond the glory of military genius, beyond the glory of man's achievements in the material building of empires, whose shattered splendours lie half-buried under the sands of the desert, beyond the glories of intellectual genius which shines in Shakespeare or Tennyson, there is a glory of moral character and spiritual worth whose value has been supreme in human history.

The student of history notes the greatness of the Pharaohs of Egypt as builders of empires along lines of material greatness; but never hesitates to pronounce Moses the great lawgiver, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, as having

been a factor of far greater value in the advance of mankind through the centuries of human progress. When old Homer sang of Ulysses and of Troy, at the same time David was the sweet singer of Israel. Homer may shine in poetic genius in the realm of mythical imagination beyond the power of David; but Israel's psalmist soars into a world of spiritual vision and lifts the soul into living touch with the God of righteousness and mercy, and to-day his songs live to comfort and inspire millions of human kind, as Homer's verse never will and never could. Cæsar was the conqueror of the world by the power of the sword; but Jesus Christ is proving the conqueror of millions more than Cæsar ruled, and the power of Jesus is that of unselfish love. Napoleon was another Cæsar of a later day; but Martin Luther gave to the world a liberty of conscience and light upon the problems of life where Napoleon was utterly shorn of power. Yes, the glory of character in moral strength and spiritual vision has been the supreme reality in the history of men.

It is exactly this fact that gives us reason to study with special fidelity the second feature mentioned above. For these very lives of our fellow men are products of that process of transformation according to which we may be changed from un-Christ-like characters until we grow to be more like Him. There are some men who do not believe this. The Apostle Paul tells us that when Moses came down from the mount at Sinai he had a veil over his face. From this incident Paul was led to write of the fact, so painfully evident in his time, that Israel had generally failed to see God's truth in its clearness because of the veil that was upon their hearts. Paul's point is that none are so blind as they who do not wish to see. It is as true to-day. Let a man once be concerned about his sin, convicted of his guilt, burdened for the cleansing of his life, hungry for spiritual strength, and that man will not be long in turning in any direction where he may hope for help. Paul knew from personal experience the truth of his statement that the veil is taken away when men turn to Christ.

There are two factors in this making of manhood. In our last chapter we urged that the main reason for man's failure of victory is that he has ignored divine help, and has attempted to solve his problem alone. It is as men realize that the measure and meaning of manhood are found in Jesus Christ, and that in Him alone they can find cleansing and power, that they will give place to the teaching and leading of His divine Spirit whose regenerating work is essential to every human soul. This is the power of God that reaches down from the kingdom of heaven to human levels to vitalize anew the helpless soul in its sin, and lift it up to the life that is in the heavenlies. Too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the fact of man's utter helplessness without the work of the Spirit of God in his life. Every man who attempts to get along without God's help is failing of victory, and will continue to fail, and knows it well.

At this time let us note especially the second factor in this making of manhood, namely, the human part of the work.

Prof. Henry Drummond has written a brilliant monograph in which he tells us that we have nothing to do but to keep on looking at Jesus, beholding Him continually, and that God does the rest. But I am thoroughly convinced that the brilliant professor has not given sufficient emphasis to the teaching of God's Word regarding man's part in this process. There is need of more statement regarding what is involved in this continual beholding. Man's part in this process is fundamentally a work of reflection. There are two kinds of reflection, and both are involved in the experience we are considering.

There is a law in the human constitution according to which every man reflects in his life the thought which is dominating his desires and endeavours. Every human life is a mirror. If you desire to know what is really making the greatest impression upon your neighbour's life, you will just need to watch him for a time. Upon that mirror the soul reflects the opinions, the desires, the purposes, the hopes, of men. And at that point where conduct appears,

character is focused. You will see that this fact makes character-building a process of spiritual photography. My life becomes like that upon which I have fixed my thought, my desires, my endeavours. You cannot escape the result. Those things to which we give most heed dominate us with increasing power, shape us, and lead us along the lines of their character.

But we cannot fail to see that it is this very law that leads us to appreciate the possibility of being changed. We may determine what shall be the object of our desires, our hopes, our purposes. Here is where the other kind of reflecting obtains. Reflecting, in this meaning of it, is simply thinking. The world needs nothing more than thinkers. Most people do little thinking of a thorough and earnest sort. But this exercise of the soul is absolutely essential to strength and to victory. Repentance, faith, obedience, all become effective only in thoughtful lives. Have you thought of the significance of that word "contemplation"? It means con-templeing, building a temple together with the

Spirit of truth. "Instruction" is just building a structure in the soul. "Information" is no other than the same constructive task of forming in a man's daily life the results of his thinking, whether those results be base and deforming, or beautiful and transforming in the life.

Note now how these two factors, the divine and the human, are to work together in the making of manhood. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of truth, and His instrument is the Word of God. Jesus Christ said to His disciples: "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." The Apostle Peter said we are "born again by the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever." And Paul writes in another letter: "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed (how?) by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Again our Lord said: "This is life eternal to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent." But again we are taught that "we shall know when we follow on to know." Here

is our part of the task. We are to hold our minds, and hearts, and consciences and wills, as sensitive plates before the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of God will take that truth and make it plain, convicting, converting, constructing, completing the work of making a new man in Christ Jesus. There is a process in photography according to which the light may be poured upon the sensitive plate with such intensity that it at once blots out the old impression and imprints the new. It is something like this that goes on in the changing life of men.

On every side we have seen this miracle of grace accomplished. I have in mind a man in the city of Chicago who lived until he was almost forty years of age without Jesus Christ. He was successful in business, and had a happy home, as he counted happiness. He went to church about once or twice a year, perhaps at Easter and at Christmas. But at one of those services his thought was arrested by the truth, and for the first time in his life he began to think seriously and honestly

about the supreme problems of life. He was a husband and father, and the sense of responsibility concerning his influence in his home touched his conscience with searching power. I recall a conversation with that man three years later. He could scarcely believe the experience that had transformed his life. How he ever lived without Jesus Christ and supposed that he was getting on very well, he could no longer imagine, for now Christ had come to be everything in his daily life. In that home a family altar had been erected. His business took on entirely a new meaning, for stewardship was the key-note there. He was indeed a new man in the Lord. Reflecting as a mirror, beholding the glory of the living Christ, he had been transformed in his inmost soul, and those who have known him through these years have seen him grow from glory of character to added glory of character, even as from the Lord the Spirit. For this man has come to be the temple of the Holy Spirit, building manhood there in increasing strength and beauty, and in his soul is the supreme

joy of the earnest of that blessed victory in Jesus Christ which will one day be complete. That is what it means.

This is the product out of the process which you and I may know, as many another man has known it. This is what it means to be children of light and to live into His life who is the Light of the world.

V

MARKS OF MANHOOD

I. The Spirit of Sonship

NO single word gathers into itself so much of meaning for the Christian as the word "sonship." As we think of the Christ of God, sharing from all eternity the glory of the Father; as we think of the Christ of history, coming down to bring to us this fellowship with God; as we think of the Christ of experience, coming in to realize unto our inmost souls the reality of God's life filling our own; as we think of the Christ of glory, returning to His throne to draw unto Himself all who come unto God by Him; the one word "sonship" covers the whole story and expresses the meaning of it all. Here we have sonship possessed, revealed, realized, shared, enjoyed forever.

Recent scholarship has brought to the attention of the Christian world certain

illuminating facts concerning the Roman law as throwing important light on many statements in the New Testament, especially certain teachings prominently emphasized in the writings of the Apostle Paul. Conspicuous among these is the light furnished upon the subject of adoption into sonship as children of God. At the era of the beginnings of the Christian Church there were only about ten thousand citizens of Rome. All the remaining millions were slaves. The one dream of every Roman slave was that some time, somehow, he might become a free man. This freedom could be obtained in just one way, according to the Roman law, and that was by being adopted as a son by a citizen. Citizenship, liberty, and sonship were one and the same thing. There were two ways according to which a slave might become adopted. One was by the free grace of a citizen who might become interested in a slave, and adopt him as a son. Often these slaves were highly educated Greeks, who were even superior to their masters. The second method was for the slave, who

had secured the favour of his master, to be allowed to earn enough money to buy his freedom. For there were certain poor citizens who had their price, and were ready to adopt any slave as a son who could pay the required price. It was to this that the centurion referred when he said to Paul, "With a great price I obtained this freedom."

Furthermore, the Roman law made every child equally an heir with every other child. This was not true of the Hebrew law, which held to the custom of primogeniture. One cannot therefore understand Paul's words in his letter to the Romans, "If children, then heirs," unless he appreciates that this is true under the Roman law. Moreover, the law required that there should always be a witness when there was a money transaction. Hence the words of Paul, "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God." Now these provisions of the law by which slaves became sons and citizens and free men were known all over the Roman empire, for

this subject was always "in the air" among the people. Therefore, when the Apostle Paul desired to illustrate what it meant for those who were slaves to sin to be saved through Jesus Christ, he seized upon this happy experience of adoption. This was the redemption by the blood of Christ out of slavery into the glorious liberty of the children of God, out of the privations of the slave into the full rights of citizenship possessed by the son.

Because he used this illustration more or less through all his writings, the Apostle Paul has been pronounced by some critics as legalistic. But had these critics only known the facts, they would have seen, as we do now, that Paul did the most popular thing that any man could have done when he rang the changes upon this blessed experience so familiar to the Roman world, and so illuminating as an explanation of what occurs when a sinner becomes redeemed and is adopted into the household of faith as a child of God, having henceforth his citizenship "in the heavenlies." The Apostle Peter refers to this same ex-

perience when he writes of "being begotten again unto a living hope," and it is to this same experience that John refers when he uses the words concerning "the right to become the sons of God" accorded to all who receive Christ. It was quite customary for one who had become adopted out of slavery into citizenship to speak of the experience in the words, "I was born again on that day." Our Lord may have had the same experience in mind when He spake to Nicodemus and expressed surprise that the teacher of the law was slow to appreciate the point that he "must be begotten again," just the word used in the act of adoption.

The Bible makes clear three facts. First, that man has forfeited his sonship as a child of God through sin. There would be no meaning in the statement that men are given the right to become the sons of God, if they had never forfeited that sonship. We have considered this fact in our chapter on "The Marring of Manhood." The second fact is that there is a difference between ownership and pos-

session. I own an umbrella; but some one else possesses it. The Lord Christ owns us all, for He "has bought us with His own precious blood." He has a right to us, to our love, to our allegiance, our service, our life. But He will not force His claim, though He urges that claim upon us all. We must choose to give ourselves unto Him. Hence the third fact, namely, the emphasis upon the responsibility which rests upon every man in the face of Christ's offer of salvation and His claim upon our allegiance.

A college student once said to me: "You preachers tell us that we cannot save ourselves. But surely it is evident that a man's responsibility reaches no further than his ability. Therefore, if we cannot save ourselves, we cannot be held responsible if we are not saved." It was an honest statement. Note the answer. We have not the ability to save ourselves; but we have the ability to accept or reject an offered salvation. Our responsibility is not as an agent, but is as a recipient. If I desire to go to London, but have no

money or strength to work my way, I am not responsible for not getting to London. But if a friend offers me a thousand dollars, I am now responsible if I do not reach London, for I have the power to accept or reject the offered means that will enable me to do what I could never do without it. This is exactly the case with every man who knows of Christ's offered salvation. The man cannot save himself; but he can accept or reject Christ's offer to do for him all that is necessary. Hence the words in the Gospel by John, "This is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. . . . He that believeth not is condemned because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." And John tells us that they who received Christ were they who believed in His name.

Now the point to be emphasized is that this responsibility of men as recipients is not simply for the act of accepting Christ; but rests upon every Christian in view of

the way that he grows into the fellowship of Christ. Manifestly, sonship has just begun when the adoption has taken place. Every former slave has great dreams of what he will be as a citizen and son. Christ stands before every child of God saying: "I have come that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly." The supreme need of the Church of Christ to-day is Christians who know of the blessed realities of this more abundant life. Too many Christians are weak to-day and conscious of being shorn of power with God for men, and of power with men for God, because they are not cultivating the possibilities of sonship as the children of the living God. Christ probably had this same experience of adoption in mind when He said: "Henceforth I call you no longer servants (bond-servants or slaves), but I call you friends." He might have said brothers; but they would grasp the thought of being His friends better.

What is finer than to find a father and son true friends, even brothers in all that

goes to bind two souls in a blessed unity of love, of trust, of allegiance, of eagerness to be of service? Surely this is exactly what Christ seeks, and what our Father in heaven seeks, as we come up into the friendship of real sonship in Christ! We may mention at least four things that are essential to true friendship. First, loving the same things. The mere statement is self-evident. No argument is necessary at this point. The question that ought to search us here is—Do we love the things of Christ above every other thing? In the realm of our desire have we put first things first? The second essential is mutual understanding. Only as people come to love the same things is it possible for them rightly to understand each others' aims and purposes and efforts in life. It is as we realize that God knows us altogether, and that He sees the best things for us when He gives us His laws for our living, that we begin to understand Him and His love. Then and only then can we enter into His life as we enter into His thought for us and learn more and more to love the things that He

loves. This is the joy of the true friendship of sonship.

The third essential to friendship grows along these lines, namely, mutual trust. Here again a question should search us. We come to the place where we are sure that we can trust our God ; but what about our having reached the place where He can trust us ? I once heard a man, in the city of Chicago, say to a friend who was going through the fires : " Old man, you can count on me through to the end. You are having a terrible experience ; but you may be sure that I will stand by you through it all ! " It thrilled me as I heard it. And that man was certain of his love and his allegiance as he spake. Surely something like that must be our ambition in our relation to Jesus Christ. It must not be enough for us to say that we are sure we can trust Him ; but we must seek to grow into that place where we can say : " Oh, Christ, you can count on me ! " And this is realized in the fourth essential, namely, mutual self-surrender. Christ has given Himself without reservation for us

and to us. We must likewise give ourselves without reserve to Him and for Him and His cause.

In order to realize sonship in this kind of friendship with our Lord, one thing is absolutely necessary. Friendship is utterly impossible unless you give time to it. Here again the statement is self-evident. No man expects ever to cultivate friendship without planning to give time to it, and giving all the time possible. Perhaps the point of growth in our friendship with our Lord is at that point of coming to understand Him better. We know that communion involves the imparting of thought between two friends. And we all know the method of doing this in fellowship with the Lord. He speaks to us through His Word and by the illuminating touch of His Spirit of truth; while we speak to Him in prayer and in the expression of our loving allegiance in our every action. Let us pause long enough to let this necessity grip us. No man ever grew into sonship, with the increasing strength of spiritual power in appreciation of God's truth and

inspiration to service for mankind, who did not cultivate this twofold means of growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. But no man, who has been faithful here, ever failed thus to grow.

Too many children of God have not entered into their sonship, as our Father would have us do. Some years ago an orphan boy was adopted by some great hearts who offered him a father's and a mother's love. The first night that he spent in the new home, when the time to retire arrived, all the children of the family ran into the arms of father and mother for a good-night kiss; but the newly adopted son held back ill at ease. The sense of estrangement was not yet gone. Some persuasion was necessary before he entered into the place of a true child in that home. The next night it was easier, and not many days had passed before he ran for his kiss as naturally as the other children, really forgetting that it had not always been so. Even so we must enter into our sonship. For too many it is as if a friend had deposited to our credit a million dollars, and we

check out a few hundreds and starve along as if there were nothing more available for us. But there is, very much more. The secret of entering into it we shall discuss in our next chapter. Love beckons us to a higher, richer, stronger, sweeter life in the friendship of our Lord.

VI

MARKS OF MANHOOD

II. The Spirit of Surrender

A GREAT many Christians are hungry for something richer, something more satisfying, something more abiding, something more abundant, in the Christian life. Thousands in the Church have no such hunger and do not want it. They are not seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; but there are some who long for nothing so much as to know the secret of such an abundant life as is suggested by the Apostle Paul in the two prayers which are found in his letters to the Ephesians and Colossians.

The teaching of the New Testament is very clear upon the subject, but there has been some confusion about it in the popular mind. One reason for this confusion is found in the King James Version of the account of Paul's visit to some disciples at

Ephesus, where he is represented as saying to them (Acts 19 : 2) : " Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed ? " That incorrect translation gives the impression that there is a second gift of the Holy Spirit, the first being at the time of conversion, the second at some later time. But that is not the teaching. The question which Paul asked, as is properly translated in the revision, was : " Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed ? " Paul evidently meant to teach that every Christian receives the Holy Spirit at conversion, and he does not intimate anywhere that there is a second gift of the Spirit.

On the day of Pentecost, when Peter preached his wonderful sermon, the people cried out asking what they should do. The reply of Peter is for us, as it was for them. He said : " Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit " (Acts 2 : 38). Baptism is administered upon faith in Christ as the Cleanser from sin. Therefore, the teaching is clear that we must do

two things in order to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit: first, repent of our sins; second, believe in Jesus Christ as the Saviour from sin. No other conditions are required. If you have repented and believed, you have received the Holy Spirit. But some will say, "We have done these things long ago." Possibly. Possibly not.

When Paul asked his question of those disciples at Ephesus they did not know of the Holy Spirit. When asked, they said they were baptized unto John's baptism. That is, they had done only one of the things required, for John's baptism was unto repentance. Then Paul explained to them how John himself had taught that men must also believe in Christ as God's anointed Saviour. Then they also believed in Christ, and received the Holy Spirit. Perhaps some people now repent without believing; but it is my conviction that many more have failed of true repentance. Many have a general sense of need, realizing their helplessness to save themselves, and they believe in Christ as the world's hope and Saviour, in a general

way, making a general confession of sin and publicly announcing themselves as followers of Christ; but they have never truly repented of their sin, and have never realized what true repentance means. They have done only one of the two things required, and they have not received the Holy Spirit. True repentance involves the surrender of our wills to the will of God. The heart of sin is self-will. True repentance is not only sorrowful because of guilty conduct; but yields the throne, where self-will has ruled, to the will of Christ. To all who do this the Holy Spirit is given. Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 3 : 16): "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" And these same Christians he had described as carnal, just babes in Christ. Yet the Spirit of God was dwelling in them.

But some one asks: "Is there then no second blessing? Is there no baptism of the Spirit with power for service, of which we have heard so much?" Yes, often there is this added blessing in the experi-

ence of the Christian, which was not known at conversion. It may be a second blessing, or a third blessing, or a tenth; but it is not an additional gift of the Holy Spirit. It is due to the fact that the Christian is more fully surrendered to the Holy Spirit's indwelling than when he first believed. We sometimes wait and pray and agonize for this second blessing, as if it were some additional gift from God; but that is not the way to secure the blessing. Instead of waiting for God to do something more for us, we must see that God is waiting for us to do something more for Him. We ask how we may have more of the Holy Spirit. The answer is found in our answer to another question, namely, How may the Holy Spirit have more of us? And we can answer that question, and we must answer it. Here is the secret of blessing, the secret of power. We have received the Holy Spirit at our conversion; but we have not yielded fully to His indwelling and His control of our lives.

In the great recent revival in India some of the people who came out of the dark-

ness of paganism not only experienced a repentance because of sin that was radical, thorough and cleansing ; but they accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and also as Lord, truly surrendering utterly to His will, and from the very beginning of their Christian lives they were so filled with the Holy Spirit as to leave no doubt about the fact in the minds of all who knew them. One of these was a humble low-caste man by the name of Goula. Missionaries have told me that they had realized the power of prayer more from what they had witnessed in Goula's life than they had ever known from contact with any other man. An idea of his consecration will be given in the following incident. One day he came to the missionary in charge of the station where he lived in the Punjab, saying in anxious tones : "Sahib, I wish to ask you a question !" He was so earnest that the missionary exclaimed : "Why, Goula, what is the matter ?" He replied : "Oh, Sahib, I have just had a conversation with a man (telling the conversation), and I wonder if I glorified God as perfectly in

that conversation as I might have done." That missionary told me that as Goula looked into his eyes, anxious lest he had not glorified God as perfectly as he might have done, he, the Christian missionary with centuries of opportunity back of him, felt humiliated before this humble Christian Hindu, just out of the centuries of pagan darkness, for he had never reached the point of such consecration as that. Goula's very thought was one constant prayer that God would be glorified to the highest possible degree in his every word and act.

A life like that is God's thought for every Christian. But just here we fail. We open the outside door of our life to Christ; but there are many inside doors still shut against Him. Christ asks us to open every door all the way into the throne room of the soul. By just so much as we have done this we have received the added blessing, by just so much we know of the more abundant life, and of increasing power with God. It is at this point that the soul has its great battle against

"the world, the flesh and the devil." It is the war between the spirit and the flesh. Hence it is that Paul urges us to present our bodies unto God. It is determining the place of the earthly life, as related to the place of the heavenly life, for the Christian. Shall we be conformed to this world? Or shall we be transformed by doing the will of God? That is the question. At the time of conversion the Holy Spirit enters; but at the time of surrender He enters into full possession. All of Paul's pleadings with the Christians to whom he wrote were for this, that they would not stop at a half-hearted allegiance to Christ; but would yield themselves wholly unto God. For if we do not yield to Him, we grieve Him in our self-will.

Have you ever tried it? Have you ever said: "Lord, take my plans, my hopes, my desires, my ambitions, my will, my dearest treasure. I take my hands from off myself, and yield my life utterly to Thee!" If you have ever tried it, you know something of the volcano that suddenly broke forth in your soul, as the flesh

protested against such a thing. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" cried out in resistance to the surrender of the spirit to God. You were amazed to discover how unwilling you really were to make an honest surrender to the will of God. If you have never tried it, you know nothing about it, and cannot even imagine the intensity of the struggle.

But if you have never surrendered, all your praying and waiting and agonizing before God will avail nothing. Obedience is the first essential to prevailing prayer. It was when Abraham had taken his dearest treasure and laid it on God's altar, that God said: "Because thou hast done this thing, I will bless thee." Paul wrote to the Corinthians that the explanation of the manifestation of the power of God in certain churches in Macedonia was in the fact (2 Cor. 8: 5) that "they first gave their own selves to the Lord." This is what God asks of us all. Nothing else will do if we hold back the throne of self-will. The great question is, Have you surren-

dered? Waiting and praying are proper; but not in the hope that God can give you some added blessing so long as you are not willing to be surrendered to His will. Rather in the recognition that you must be cleansed so that God may take out of your life that which hinders His blessing. God is ready; but we are not ready. God is a mighty workman asking for tools. We are to present our lives to Him to use us. If we do this, He will soon use us to His glory and to the helping of our fellows.

Do you think of all this as an act of great self-denial? If so, ask the question, Which self? Is it the higher self or the lower self that is to be denied? When we indulge our lower self with the things that satisfy the desires of the flesh, we are guilty of an act of self-denial of the most serious character. We are denying our higher, nobler selves their rights, we are starving our spiritual natures, we are quenching the flame of the Holy Spirit's fire in our souls. But when we turn our souls upward towards God that He may open all the flood-gates of His blessings,

then we are denying the lower self, keeping the body under, refusing to let the animal rule the spirit, refusing to let even the good become the enemy of the best. Self-denial! Ah, yes, how much of the history of the Christian Church is the story of the denial of the soul's highest aspirations and deepest hungers in order that the flesh may be indulged in the things of earth that can never satisfy the soul! And the Spirit of God has been grieved, and the Church has accordingly been shorn of power. No tools are presented to the waiting, eager hand of God, and the building of the kingdom drags slowly, all too slowly after nineteen centuries of Christian history.

There is an old text in the 110th Psalm which is translated "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power"; but if you will look at the Psalm you will find that the translators have put in some words in italics, adding to the Hebrew. The real meaning of the text is that whenever the people are willing, that is the day of God's power. The whole Bible teaches this. Paul pleads for a "living sacrifice." You

know that word means "making holy," and its deeper thought is that consecration is not a hardship; but is just making it a holy thing to give to God our time, our desires, our strength, our wills, our all. That is the glory of it. Paul declares this to be a reasonable service. What else, what less, could be reasonable for redeemed sons of God? The power of God is available for you, if you want it above everything else. But if you want something else more than this, then you cannot have this. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked." He knows my heart and yours. Test your surrender at the point of giving of your money to obey the command of Christ to give the Gospel to every one who has not yet heard of Him. How does the test work at that point? God grant us grace to learn to live increasingly into the experience of those significant lines

"Oh, the bitter shame and sorrow
That a time could ever be
When I let the Saviour's pity
Plead in vain, and proudly answered
'All of self and none of Thee.'

"Yet He found me; I beheld Him
Bleeding on the accursed tree;
Heard Him pray, 'Father, forgive them,'
And my wistful heart said faintly,
'Some of self and some of Thee.'

"Day by day His tender mercy,
Healing, helping, full and free,
Sweet, and strong, and oh, so patient,
Brought me lower, while I whispered
'Less of self and more of Thee.'

"Higher than the highest heavens,
Deeper than the deepest sea,
Lord, Thy love at last hath conquered.
Grant me now my soul's petition—
'None of self and all of Thee.'"

VII

MARKS OF MANHOOD

III. The Spirit of Stewardship

THAT is a startling statement which the prophet Malachi made as he summed up the story of Israel's unfaithfulness as a people. He did not refer especially to their failure to remember God in prayer, or their idolatry, or their alliances with surrounding nations; but he referred to the way they had used their money as the real secret of all their sins. Would it be a fair thing to say in our time that this is the final test of a man's Christianity? It would seem to be in the sight of God. After all men may say in the way of pious professions, nothing more surely reveals the degree of our love for Christ and His cause than the manner in which we give of our substance to the advancement of that cause.

God charged Israel with the crime of

having robbed Him of tithes and offerings. We understand the reason for this. In the establishment of the theocracy God claimed one-seventh of the time and one-tenth of the income of His people as belonging to Him. His claim was based not only upon the fact that He was their Creator; but also upon the further fact that He was their Redeemer. It was evident that this was for Israel's good, that they might be developed into a strong allegiance to God and lifted above the level of the surrounding nations. And God makes exactly the same claim upon us to-day. Does He also teach us to-day that the real secret of our sin, after nineteen centuries of Christian history, in failing to give the knowledge of His salvation to a lost world, and in our compromises with "the world, the flesh, and the devil," is to be found at this same point of the way we use our money?

Let us consider an illustration that sets before us the true situation. A father has developed a very important business, and one day is about to elevate his son into partnership with him in extending the busi-

ness. To this son he makes the following statement: "My dear son, I am about to take you into partnership with myself in this great business. I have devoted my life to its development, and I deem it the most important business in all the world. Its success will be of the greatest benefit to all mankind. I have educated you and given you all the advantages possible in order that you might be equipped for the work of labouring together with me in extending this business, and I now give to you your capital for the work, together with my own backing and assistance at every point where you will need my help. Yonder is a field where I wish to establish the business and see it steadily developed into success. Go and do your best, and always count upon me to assist you."

Furthermore, the father would say: "One thing I require, my son. You are to pay me yearly one-tenth of your income. That is a debt which you will owe me, and is to be paid out of your first disbursements. After the one-tenth is paid, you will have the nine-tenths at your disposal.

But I wish to suggest that this business is so important that I hope you will see the desirability, after you have paid my tenth each year, of putting into the extension of the business a large part of the remaining nine-tenths. For just by so much as the business grows, you yourself will be increasingly prospered and all mankind will benefit as well. Your action will reveal your appreciation of the real importance of the business, and will also reveal the degree of your love for me."

That is the situation. Generous indeed is the father who grants nine-tenths of the income from the business to his son. God gives us life, intelligence, harvests, precious metals, all the resources out of which we are to develop the highest interests of our own lives and the lives of others. He claims the tithe as His own. Is it too much for God to claim? Nay, is it not just also for Him to ask us to put some of the nine-tenths that remain into the extension of the great business of redeeming a lost world to Him? Imagine the feelings of the father should his son spend all of the nine-

tenths upon his own selfish desires, adding nothing from it to the enlarging of the business! Nay, imagine the feelings of the father should the son not only spend the nine-tenths upon himself; but should also deny that the one-tenth was due his father, and refuse even to pay that! That is what it means to rob God, now as then.

The spirit of faithful stewardship, therefore, means three things: First, plain, simple honesty. We have a certain sense of honour, generally, about paying our debts to men: but thousands of Christians have no such sense of honour about paying their debts to God. A man is as much a thief who refuses to pay one-tenth of his income to God, as if he were to refuse to pay a debt which he owes to his neighbour. There is no *giving* to God when a man devotes his tithe to the Lord's cause. *That is paying his honest debt.* Giving does not begin until after that tithe is paid, and free-will offerings follow. Such offerings come from the nine-tenths. The devout Jew gave at least one-fifth of his income in offerings, thus paying and giving at least three-tenths

to the Lord's cause. The average Christian has never reached the devotion of the devout Jew.

Many Christians imagine the support of the Church to be an act of benevolence. By no means! It is no more benevolence than the support of the public schools. The Church is as necessary to the welfare of the community as the school. It must be maintained in self-defense. Should the tithe be paid, the cause of Christ would thrive and flourish beyond our imagination. But should Christians go beyond the tenth everywhere, in loving free-will offerings, there would be more than is needed, as in the time of the building of the tabernacle.

Moreover, God makes no exceptions in His demands. Men will say they cannot pay their tithe because they are building a home, or because of some other obligation which they have assumed. But imagine a man going to his grocer and stating that he is paying his rent, and his tailor, and various other obligations; therefore he cannot pay his grocer! Not only absurd, but simply dishonest! Especially when the

man desires the grocer to continue to provide for his needs. For this is what men desire God to do, continuing to us life and all the powers with which to get gain. Nay, God's claim is for the first fruits. He insists that His tithe must be paid first. Is it not a just claim?

Furthermore, God makes no exceptions because of a man's poverty. If an Israelite could not bring of the firstlings of the flock, because he had no flocks, then he was to bring a pair of turtle doves or young pigeons. And if he should be too poor to bring this offering, then it was to be a handful of meal. The point is that if a man has only a dollar, ten cents of it belongs to God. Indeed, the fact is, that the man can better live on his ninety cents, and pay his tithe to God, than to use it all for himself; for it is certain that God will bless him in so doing, as He cannot should the man insist on keeping God's tenth for himself. It is simply a question of downright honesty first of all.

Faithful stewardship means, in the second place, an expression of thankful

love to the Father. A true son, entering upon the partnership mentioned, would say: "My father has given me far more than money can ever repay. My obligation reaches far beyond the point of paying that tenth which he requires. I owe everything I have to him, and I will gladly devote more than the tenth to the extension of this great business, careful not to waste anything upon my own desires beyond the point of necessary provision for the actual needs of life and the development of the powers which I possess so that I may be increasingly useful and successful in the business." When Christians reach that place of allegiance to our Father in heaven, the problem of the greatest of all tasks will be solved.

For, in the third place, faithful stewardship means genuine and enthusiastic allegiance to the greatest of all causes known to mankind. The pathos of human history is that after all these centuries men have failed to catch the true vision of the transcendent importance of this great cause. Nothing in all the world is so

worth while as this. Every true Christian will seek to make his whole life count for the cause of Christ, his time, his brains, his money, his prayers, his strength. All the effort to make money will be for the purpose of climbing upon it as a scaffolding for the purpose of building the kingdom of God in all the earth. We say: "We are not our own: we are bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ, whose we are and whom we serve." We say it in our formal professions. When we live it, stewardship will be something glorious in a joyful church, which has become a real blessing to the world.

Some years ago, a friend told me of a visit he made to one of the merchant princes of Philadelphia, who heartily responded to his appeal for help. Then he wrote out an address, giving it to my friend, saying he desired him to go and present his cause to a lady who would be glad to help him. Accordingly, the friend took a cab to the given address, noting that he was being driven into a poor section of the city. At last the cab stopped

before the door of a tenement, and he wondered if there could be some mistake; but upon inquiry was told the lady lived "in the rear of the top floor." Wondering, he climbed the steps to the top floor, where his knock was answered by a summons to enter. Opening the door he found an old woman seated near the window, fixing the bristles in the wood for scrubbing brushes! She greeted him most kindly, asking him to be seated. He explained his errand, and was assured that she would love to hear his story. When it was finished, she arose and went to a bag hanging on the wall, saying: "This is the Lord's portion. One-half of all that I make belongs to Him. The rest suffices for my needs." From this bag she counted out thirty-seven cents, giving it to him with a happy smile, saying: "I am so glad to give it to you. God will bless it."

Too many Christians have never realized that our Master has distinctly forbidden us to "lay up treasures upon earth," and too many are doing this thing above every other. It is along the line which must be

drawn between our wants and our needs that we shall find the line of light upon the whole problem of fidelity in stewardship. And it is when we come in that fidelity to our God that we may claim His wondrous promise, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

VIII

MARKS OF MANHOOD

IV. The Spirit of the Soldier

THE Apostle Paul was a great fighter. There was a time when he hated Jesus Christ, hated the followers of Jesus, hated the new teachings of Jesus, and concentrated all his powers to destroy every one connected with the new movement. But one day he heard a young man make a statement regarding Christ, a statement which convinced Saul of Tarsus that the young man was telling the truth, for his words rang true and his face was shining like the face of an angel. As Saul listened to Stephen, he became convinced that he was making a terrible mistake. His conscience began to sting from that hour, and his heart became hungry for a knowledge of that same Christ. No man ever truly longed to know Jesus Christ who has not been given the vision of his Sa-

viour. Saul of Tarsus caught that vision, and became a changed man. Now all his powers of intensity, of enthusiasm, of devotion, were as earnestly given to help where he had formerly hindered. He at once began to witness for Jesus, showing that He is the Messiah.

One of Paul's converts was a young man by the name of Timothy, who had made a good profession of his faith before many witnesses. Paul became specially interested in this young man. He knew what a struggle it is for any young man to be a true Christian, and he wrote a letter to Timothy which would help and strengthen him in his Christian life. In that letter he urged Timothy to "fight the good fight of faith." That means that every Christian is to be a soldier. It is a fact too little emphasized in our time. Too many people think of the Church of Christ as being a flock of sheep to be fed, and fed, and sheared, as often as it is hopeful. But the Church is to be much more than that. It is to be an army of soldiers trained to fight this good fight of faith. The greatest of

all the battle-fields is the battle-field of the human heart, where the invisible forces of the enemy lay siege to the citadel of the soul to drag down and destroy.

Moreover, the Church is to be an army of conquest, not simply a guard for defense. It is to be aggressive in the field of action, not simply a force in the barracks. Soon after the war between Russia and Japan, I met a captain of the Russian navy, sailing from Athens to Smyrna, who told me of the lack of discipline in both the army and navy of Russia, of the spirit of mutiny, of unpatriotic selfishness, of reckless revelry on the very edge of a battle. And he said: "Of course, such a spirit as that could only mean defeat at last." Is it too much to say there is some such spirit in the very Church of Christ to-day? Is it not true that we are right in the midst of the greatest battle in all human history, and some of the men who are actually enlisted under the banner of our great Captain do not even know that there is a battle on? It is amazing; but it is true, that many are concerned about self-centred

pleasures, about the dress-parade, who have no conception of the tremendous fight that is nothing less than a battle to the death. It is high time that the men of the Church of Christ should catch the spirit of the soldier and cultivate that spirit with increasing zeal. There are certain marks of a true soldier, very familiar, but always important to remember.

A true soldier of Christ will be regularly enlisted for life. There are men who enlist under the banner of the Cross, who fall away ere long, and forget that they ever began the life. In an army organization when a man thus leaves off his faithful relation to his regiment, men call him a traitor. "There is no discharge in this war," therefore, when a man discontinues his allegiance to the cause, there is really but one word to describe his action. It is an ugly word; but the fact is even more ugly than the word which describes it. When Julius Cæsar landed with his army on the shores of Great Britain, after the disembarkation was complete, he commanded some of his men to take some small boats, and some

burning torches, and set fire to the ships. This was done, and as the Romans saw their ships burn down to the water's edge and disappear under the waves, they knew they could never see Rome again unless they conquered the people who were looking down upon them from the hills beyond. And the Britons, as they witnessed this extraordinary spectacle, began to understand how Cæsar was the conqueror of the world. Even something like that must mark the enlistment of men as soldiers of Jesus Christ. The old life must be burned away forever. This consecration to His greatest of all causes must have no "string" to it; but must be without compromise until the victory is won.

The true soldier of Christ will remember that the first essential to loyal service is the readiness to obey orders.

> "Theirs not to make reply,
> Theirs not to reason why,
> Theirs but to do and die."

Even when the rank and file cannot see the wisdom of the command, this is a true sol-

dier's duty; but when every man can see that the command of the Captain is clearly one of wisdom and righteousness, then to obey is the only action to be justified. There is no more important question for any man to ask himself day by day than this—Am I truly obeying the commands of Jesus, my Lord and Master? An earnest Christian was asked to seek opportunity to help a young man who was a member of the church, but was drifting. When he met the young man, he said: "Are you a friend of Christ?" "Oh, yes!" replied the young man. Then the Christian said that Jesus had declared that we are His friends if we do whatsoever He commands us, and repeated his question: "Are you really a friend of Jesus Christ?" The young man flushed, and replied: "I am afraid that test will bar me out of the number of His friends." How many men whose names are on church rolls will be barred out by that one test! But that is Christ's test. Is it not a fair one?

In September, 1906, the Japanese opened the port of Dalney, near by historic Port

Arthur, in Manchuria. Each navy which was represented in Pacific waters sent a ship to be present at that time. Some months later, the captain of the ship from our navy which was detailed to be present told me in the city of Canton of the day when a Japanese official conducted the officers from the visiting ships about Port Arthur, explaining the items of interest in connection with the siege. When they came to the famous 203-meter-hill, some of the visitors expressed themselves as appreciating the confidence of the Russians that no army could possibly take that hill. It did seem an impossible task. Turning to the official, they asked: "How did you ever do it?" The Japanese officer lifted his cap, and with a touch of reverence in his tone, replied: "Gentlemen, we did it by climbing upon the dead bodies of Japanese soldiers who obeyed orders!" It thrilled every man present. They no longer doubted as to the explanation of Japan's victory. Patriotism in Japan was nothing less than an enthusiasm in the face of the opportunity to die for Japan. But

where has the world ever known a cause of such supreme worth as this cause of truth and righteousness of which the Lord Christ is the leader? Shall not His Church reveal a new devotion in glad obedience to His will in pushing forward the conquest of the world?

The third mark of a true soldier is that he is ready to suffer, if need be, in order to win. Imagine a man about to enlist being approached by a friend who would suggest that if he should enlist, he might have some hard fighting ahead, and rather intimating that he would be sorry that he had enlisted. Or intimating that the young soldier might have some severe hardships to endure, and that he probably had not counted the cost involved in his service. Or even suggesting that he might be called upon to die for the cause to which he proposes to give his life, and therefore he would regret the step. We would say that such a man evidently had no conception of what it means to be a soldier. Of course, he expects to have hard fighting, and of course he is ready to face hardships and suffering, if

need be, and should the final test of loyalty come, he is ready to die for the cause which he is espousing. It is because he believes in this cause that he is ready to make his life count for its triumph. Is anything less than this worthy of a man who enlists in the supreme cause of mankind?

Back in the sixties when the Civil War began, it was not thought by many that it would be a very protracted struggle; but as the days passed, it became evident that a most serious war had begun. As the call came for a hundred thousand men, and a hundred thousand more, and a hundred thousand more, there were sober hours in many homes, both in the north and in the south sections of the land. Men said to their wives and mothers and sisters: "We are ready to go; but what will you do? You may suffer for the very necessities of life. It may be that we would never come back, and what would you do then?" And the noble women, both North and South, replied: "It is true that we may suffer; but you must go! It may be that you will

never come back, which God forbid! but you must go! There is a great cause at stake, and you must go! We will suffer with you for the great cause." That was the kind of heroism manifest in all parts of the land. That was fidelity worthy of true soldiers, and it was in the hearts of women and men alike. Who will hesitate to say that just such fidelity as that is the greatest need in the Church of Christ to-day? Who doubts that we need to enter upon an era of glad self-denial such as our fathers and mothers knew in the sixties, in order that our church agencies may not go begging for funds necessary to give the Gospel of the world's Saviour to all mankind? Surely the challenge is clear and strong! Shall we respond to it like men?

The crowning fact about a true soldier of Christ is that he is certain of victory at last. Our Master has won the victory in Himself, and every man who goes with Him into this war is as certain of victory, because His conquering power is made available for every one who enlists for life, who obeys His commandments, cost what

it may. For every such one the victory is assured, and we already have the earnest of the Spirit of our Master witnessing of the sure triumph at last to our inmost souls. In the city of Philadelphia, during the Civil War, a banker was informed one day that a soldier wished to see him. He replied that probably the man wanted help, and to give him something; but was informed that the soldier asked for no help, that he was a member of the company of which the banker's son was the captain, and had a letter for him from his son. The banker leaped to his feet, exclaiming: "Show him right in!"

The soldier entered and handed the letter to the father of his captain. The letter read in substance as follows: "Dear Father: This man is a member of my company. He has been a faithful soldier; but has been mortally wounded fighting for his country. I send him to you, father, for I love him. Care for him, father, for the sake of your son." And that father, upon whom the soldier had no direct claim, took him into his arms as if he

were his own son, took him home and gave him the son's room, and cared for him as his own while he lived. Even so, when the last grand review is held, we shall have nothing to say for ourselves, nothing upon which to base a claim to a heaven we have deserved; but we will only need to look over to our Captain, and He will speak for us, saying: "Father, these are Mine whom Thou hast given Me. I will that they be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, and share with Me the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me before the world was." And the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who has revealed His great love to us in His Son, and who has lifted us into Sonship in that same love, will welcome us into the joy of our Lord. That will be victory. It may be the portion of every one of us, if we fight the good fight of faith as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, laying hold upon eternal life, whereunto we also are called.

IX

MARKS OF MANHOOD

V. The Spirit of the Servant

THE significance of the familiar appeal of Joshua unto Israel long ago is not so much in the fact that he was urging them to make a choice. They had already done that by their foolish and disloyal action; but they did not realize the significance of their act. They did not appreciate the fact that they had really chosen idolatry instead of Jehovah, involving service and allegiance. That had not occurred to them in their impetuous haste and self-will. The same thing is true of many to-day, in thoughtless indifference to the far-reaching character of so many of their choices. Every man living is a servant, is serving some end, some master. He cannot escape the fact. He may never have appreciated the fact, but the fact remains.

Man's liberty is all under law. To be subject to no law would not be liberty, but license of a most vicious character. You cannot make the wind blow; but you may set your sail in obedience to the law of the wind, and may go where you will. Your liberty is in your freedom of choice as to whether you will enter into your heritage under the law of the wind and make the most of the possibilities for your boat and your journey therein. Some people imagine they can go along without making choice concerning many important matters in human life. But that is impossible. The purpose not to make a choice is itself a choice. There is a law in the land according to which a man may make a will concerning the disposition of his property. That same law determines the disposition of his property in case he should make no will for himself. It is the law under which the man holds whatever property he may have. Some men decide that they will not make a will; but that very decision makes their will. And evidently it is when a man makes his will, accepting the fullest oppor-

tunity for exercising his liberty under the law, that he enters into the largest realization of his personal freedom. And it is exactly so when a man thinks he will not choose regarding his allegiance to Jesus Christ. In failing to choose, he has chosen.

Everywhere it is evident that the readiness to serve is the secret of power. In the instance mentioned, the man who is willing to yield himself a servant unto obedience under the law of the wind, has all the power of the wind given unto him. Yonder at Niagara the waters were saying to men for centuries: "We weigh sixty-two pounds to the cubic foot. Obey our law and get under our weight and you may have all our power." Recently it was done, and the city of Buffalo is growing in consequence as never before. So the law of electricity challenged men to yield themselves servants to obey it, and they might have all its power. Some set themselves to do this. Among them was a young man eager to discover how he might the more perfectly obey this law. Day by day

he sought light on this one question—How may I be a more faithful servant in obedience to the law of electricity? The result —a vision! wireless telegraphy! and the name of Marconi henceforth became famous.

It is true in everything. We have lately passed through an election. Men have been on the hustings. Crowds have flocked to hear them. What are they trying to do? Just one thing—to persuade the people that they will, in each case, serve them better than others. And the man who is elected, as a rule, is chosen because the people believe that he will serve the best interests involved better than the other candidates. The king or president who convinces the people that he is seeking honestly to serve them, to the best of his ability, in the interest of their best welfare, has the hearts of the nation. Take up the daily newspaper, crowded with advertisements. They simply mean that business men are seeking to convince the readers that the particular advertiser will serve the public better than others. And, as a rule,

the man who thus convinces the people will get the business. Exactly the same thing is true in the realm of spiritual power. God speaks here, as He does in every other sphere. It is His challenge to men along the line of this law, whatever may be the realm of power. Likewise to every soul who is eager to possess the realities and victories possible in the sphere of power with God for men, and with men for God, He ever points to the conditions to be met, saying, Yield yourselves servants unto obedience under this law, and the power will be yours.

We are face to face, then, with the fact that there are conditions to be met here, as in every sphere of life. Success comes only to those who meet the conditions essential to success. Too many have an utterly inadequate realization of this fact in connection with God's blessings to men. We have a striking illustration in that instance where the two sons of Zebedee came to Jesus, and asked Him if He would do them a favour, without specifying what it was. They evidently supposed that if

Christ just wanted to do so, He could give them any blessing. Too many have the same idea now. They assume that if God chooses to pour out His Holy Spirit upon them, or their churches, at any time, He can do so. But such an idea is contrary to the teaching of Scripture. Behold Christ weeping over Jerusalem and asserting that He was so eager to bring His divine blessings to that city; but Jerusalem would not have them, and Christ could not give them. Again we read that He could do no mighty works in a certain place because of the unbelief of the people. The two sons of Zebedee had no realization of what would be necessary before they could have the two places next to Christ when He came into His glory.

Let us note that Jesus did not tell them that they could not have those places; but He did tell them that in order to secure them, they must meet certain conditions which God's laws always require of aspirants to place and power. As He heard their words, He replied: "Ye know not what ye ask!" I imagine He looked

ahead just a little way, and saw Gethsemane, where James and John were one on His right hand and one on His left, for about three minutes! Ah, that was the place to stay with Him; but they forsook Him and fled, at the first suggestion of self-sacrifice in loyalty to Him. Then I think He looked beyond Gethsemane and saw Calvary, with three crosses planted there. And He thought that if James and John only realized the meaning of their prayer that day, they would stay with Him through Gethsemane, through the fierce ordeals that followed, and they would have been the other two men crucified with Him that day on Golgotha! That was His glory; but they little dreamed of such a thing. We must put together the spirit of the soldier and the spirit of the servant before we can realize the marks of a true man as a follower of Jesus Christ.

There is nothing factitious about God's gifts. They can never be a matter of veneer; but must always be an acquisition of character. It is as if two young men were to come to the president of a medical

college and say to him: "Doctor, we want you to make us the best two doctors in the land." The physician would be compelled to reply that they did not appreciate what was requisite before they could be the best physicians in the land. He would doubtless say that nothing would delight him more than to have their ambition realized, for it would be a great advantage to his college to graduate the best physicians living; but all his desire would not suffice to realize the end. They themselves must meet essential conditions before the desired consummation could be realized. Just so God speaks to every man who would actually grow into a victorious manhood in the realm of character and service. God has revealed to us His desire that we should do this; but we must be awakened with a new concern to the fact that God is waiting for us to meet the conditions which have been made plain before He can use us in His service as He is eager to do.

The appeal becomes immediately personal. One of the fatal facts about human

nature is the fact of weakness when it comes to standing face to face with duty and opportunity, standing before the face of God, and hesitating about the choice which shall be made in answer to the call to true loyalty to Christ in joyful service. And that weakness is often explained by the fact that we are waiting to see what others will do. The world needs leadership, which is not the quality that seeks to be a boss; but is the quality that is strong enough and true enough to decide to do right without waiting to see what others will do, the quality that decides to be true alone with God, if need be, and let other people watch us and follow. At the battle of Naseby there was a crisis when the outcome seemed uncertain. It was then that King Charles arose in his saddle and cried: "One more charge, gentlemen, and the day is ours!" But one of his cowardly courtiers leaned down from his horse and took the king's bridle, and swerved the line of battle, resulting in defeat. A biographer of Charles bemoans this incident, expressing the wish that some one

had been there to strike down the hand of the craven. But a biographer of Cromwell, commenting upon this wish, exclaims: "Why did not the king strike down that coward's hand with his own sword? Who would have dared to touch Cromwell's bridle on that day?" Just so we must emphasize the challenge to each one of us. We must make our decision as to what our service shall be regardless of every other man's failure, loyal if need be alone, as we remember that the great title to be given to our Saviour will be "The Faithful and the True."

Once more, the appeal is for a decision to-day. The most subtle of all temptations is that whisper of the adversary to put off until another time the decision to do what we know we should do at once. Now, if ever in the history of the Church and the world, there is reason to sound out the call:—

There's a fount about to stream,
There's a light about to gleam,
There's a midnight darkness changing into day.
Men of thought and men of action, THINK TO-DAY!

Aid its dawning, tongue and pen;
Aid it, hopes of honest men;
Bring your mountain-high petitions when you pray.
Men of faith and men of action, SPEAK TO-DAY!

But our Master's at the gate,
Heaven frowns on those who wait;
Heed His summons, victory telling, come this way.
Men of hope and men of action, ACT TO-DAY!

Thousands are exalting the slogan "The men of to-day for the Man of Galilee!" It is worthy of us and of Him; but we must make it something more than a motto. The men of the whole world need Him to-day. The call of God is in their need. But every Christian also needs Him in fuller and richer measure. One reason that God chose to save the world through a witnessing Church was that men might develop something like a Christlike character. This is the destiny that God has planned for us, that we should come to be like Christ. But such an attainment is quite impossible except we develop the spirit of the servant of this same Lord and Master, until it will be evident to those who know us best that His Spirit is really our inspiration, and our

joy, as we seek to have God use us in the world's work at its highest and best, that is, in meeting the world's need. And no one of us doubts for a moment that this need is first of all for a personal Saviour from sin, the "Man of Galilee." To give Him to all men everywhere as quickly as possible—this is the service to which He calls us. It has its manifold forms and its manifold blessings in the development of all that is God-given in us unto its highest and noblest, as individuals, and then the spreading of these gifts in the building of nations, until Christ the Lord shall dominate all hearts and all thrones. What is your prayer about it now?

X

MARKS OF MANHOOD

VI. The Spirit of the Soul-Winner

IT was the world's crisis-hour. It was the pivot-point of human history. It was the epoch-making day of all the ages. Without the walls of the city of Jerusalem a motley multitude was following with bated breath the bending form of one who was climbing the hill of Golgotha with bleeding feet and bleeding brow. We have tried in vain to picture the scenes of that eventful day. We have thought of the cruel ordeal of the crucifixion, of the vast crowds that looked and listened, and of the various utterances of the Christ while upon the cross. It was towards the end of the long hours of darkness that we are told He uttered with anguish the words "I thirst!"

We are quite sure that if we had been there that day, knowing Him as we know Him now, loving Him as we love Him now,

and it had been possible for us to do so, we would have leaped with eager haste to run and secure a cooling draught to place to the lips of the thirsting Christ. But let us not be too certain of it, for we must not fail to realize that the same Christ is calling from that same cross to-day: "I thirst! give Me to drink!" Not for the cup of cold water does He thirst to-day; but for the priceless souls for whose salvation He died. He tells us that one day we shall stand before Him to give an account, and He will say to some: "I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink!" or "I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink!" And we in surprise will ask: "When, Lord?" to which He will reply: "In the United States, in 1909! for inasmuch as ye did it, or did it not, *ye did it, or did it not, unto Me.*" We think we would have done it then. We prove the true quality of our love and our allegiance by the way we do it now.

That we are not doing it as we should is all too evident from the pitiful records which we cannot deny. The average increase in church-membership in this country

on confession of faith is seven per cent. per annum! If from that number you subtract the children who come into the Church through the natural nurture of the Christian home and Sunday-school, you have taken away four out of the seven, leaving the condemning fact that for every one hundred ministers, officers and members of the Christian Church there are only three persons won to Christ out of the world in a whole year! What a pitiful record! How it should condemn us! But does it? Are we even stirred enough to let the fact get hold of us until we begin to realize what a failure we have made as a witnessing Church of Jesus Christ? Here is the call to service. Here is the challenge to make the followers of our Lord nothing less than soul-winners in very truth.

Is it too much to say that the people of Christ generally are guilty of "the crime of unconcern"? Theoretically we profess to care whether men are saved from sin and death unto God; but actually our daily lives are proving that we really do not care. Some years ago I heard the following story

from the lips of a Presbyterian elder who was met on the street by a friend who asked him this question: "Mr. R——, how long have we known each other?" "I should think about fifteen years," was the reply. "Do you honestly believe that I must accept Jesus Christ as my Saviour, if I am to be saved?" Mr. R—— replied that he did believe that. "Do you care whether I am saved or not?" "Why, certainly!" was the reply. Then the friend said: "I do not want to hurt your feelings, but I do not believe it. As you have just said, we have known each other for about fifteen years. In all those years we have often met in social contact, and have talked about all sorts of subjects; yet in all that time you never once mentioned the name of Christ to me. You are a Christian business man of high standing in this city, and if you had ever told me that it would be worth my time to consider the claims of Christ, I would have listened to you with respect; but you never said the word. Of course, when the matter is presented theoretically, you say that you care; but do you not

think that if you had really cared one little bit you would certainly have spoken to me in fifteen years?"

My friend confessed with shame that he had often shirked and dodged opportunities which God had put in his way to speak to men about Christ. He found his neighbour deeply concerned because of a conversation which he had had on the train with a stranger who urged him to accept Christ as his Saviour. The stranger proved to be D. L. Moody, the great evangelist, and his conversation had impressed the man so deeply that he was ready to confess his desire to settle the matter rightly. Mr. R—— was deeply moved, and there on the street corner he led his friend to accept Jesus Christ. Then as he left his friend and started homeward, he lifted his eyes to heaven and cried: "God forgive me! There is something wrong about my Christianity! I have been counting myself one of the leading Presbyterian elders of this city, and yet a friend of mine can tell me that for fifteen years I have touched his life without ever

saying one word about my Saviour to him. There is something wrong about my Christianity!" And he was right. There is something wrong about that kind of Christianity. Yet that is the kind that thousands are living whose names are on church rolls. And it can mean but one thing, taken in connection with that pitiful seven per cent. It means that thousands go for days and weeks and months and years without ever saying or doing one single thing personally to try to win one soul to the Saviour.

The difficulty with the Church has been that it has been satisfied to be merely evangelical. That is, it has been willing to have its open door, its public announcements, its pure Gospel, its general invitation; and if men responded, every one was glad; but if they did not come, no one lost any sleep. But Christ said long ago that this was not enough, that when we had "all things ready" and sent out the invitation, many would not come. Then He said something more must be done. There must be a compelling constraint in bring-

ing the message and the man together. Those are significant words in John's Gospel about Andrew. It was not enough to bring Christ to Peter. He must also bring Peter to Christ. Hence we read that "he brought him to Jesus." It was individual work for individuals. It is not enough for us to bring Christ to men. We must also bring men to Christ. It is the real significance of the motto, "The men of the world for the Man of Galilee!"

There are three things that we must believe with a living faith if we ever become earnest winners of souls. First, we must believe the plain teaching of the Word of God that men out of Christ are lost and lost forever. It is a plain fact that one who does not know the way is lost. And it is just as clearly self-evident that if a lost person never finds the way, he is lost forever. But many do not believe this. They think that somehow, at some time, it will be all right. Hence, there is no compelling constraint upon many to speak, as for the very life of a friend. But God's Word is as clear as words can make it. Were we

actually to believe it, there would be a zeal for souls not now known among Christian men. Second, we must believe that Jesus Christ can save unto the uttermost. No matter how difficult the case may seem, it is not too hard for God. That conviction is essential to believing effort in behalf of lost men. Third, we must believe that if we are willing to try honestly to obey the command to speak for Him, our Lord will help us. That is a constant inspiration to speak as the opportunity is offered.

One day my conscience actually stung me into the office of a bank president who was a member of our congregation, but not a communicant. For weeks I had shirked like a coward opportunities to talk with him about the subject of confessing Christ; but that day I could not escape the constraint that was upon me. Upon entering his office, I said: "Mr. F——, I have come to talk with you about confessing Christ. I believe you are a Christian at heart; but you owe it to your Lord, to yourself, to your family, and to this community to confess your faith openly and

give your allegiance heartily to your Saviour." He frankly welcomed me with the words: "Sit down. I am glad to see you. At the last communion I saw a question in my boy's eyes, which has been asking itself to me every day since. It was this—Why does not father take the communion, as mother does? I have no answer to that question in all honesty." I realized that God had been ahead of me and had touched that man's heart. Within a half hour he had made his decision, and at the very next communion he answered his boy's question. We may surely rely upon God to help us whenever we seek to obey His command to witness for Him.

I know of a man who prays daily that God will make the burden for souls heavy upon his heart, and keep it heavy, lest he shall become indifferent. Were we all to do that, there would be a marvellous change in the life of the Church. For the genuine burden for souls always results in three things. First, it will drive us to God in the prayer of intercession. When the burden becomes heavy, we must go to the

great divine Burden-bearer. Then this burden for the salvation of a friend will always make us concerned to have our own example free from reproach. A man once came to me to ask me to pray for his wife, who was not a Christian. He asked me specially to pray that he might live his Christian life so consistently, and so victoriously, that his wife could not doubt the reality and blessedness of it. It will always be so when there is an actual concern for a soul. Third, this burden will lead us sooner or later to speak. We will be watching for the propitious opportunity, and God will give it to us, and bless us as we accept it. The burden for souls is the ballast for the ship. It steadies the Christian in all his problems and in all his service.

We often hesitate to speak to men for Christ because of our sense of unworthiness. One way to begin such a conversation is to make it plain at the very start that we are sensible of our unworthiness. It is fatal to attempt to make a man feel that you are any better than he is. He

well knows professing Christians who are not over-consistent, and they are in his mind. But when we begin with a confession of our conscious limitations, and emphasize that Christ is a Saviour of sinners, his criticisms will be disarmed, and he will be more likely to be drawn to us in readiness to listen to our plea. A young man once wrote a note to a friend, in substance as follows :—"Dear Bob :—I have long wanted to speak to you about confessing Christ; but I have been ashamed to do so, for I have been such a poor Christian myself. Yet I know that I have been helped because I have been a member of the Church, and I believe you would be also. I earnestly hope you will take the step." The next time Bob met the friend, he thanked him for the note. Nothing more was said then ; but at the next communion Bob united with the Church. It was the confession of unworthiness that made it possible for the Christian to write the note. God blessed it.

Surely we dare not consider this subject as if it were just a general discussion. We

must do nothing less than to make this directly a personal matter, with deep concern as to our position as a witness for Christ, each one. Are there friends who know you who could say to you: "For a long time we have known each other; but in all that time you never said a word to me about Christ." If so, I beg of you to promise our Lord that it shall not continue to be so. For there are hungry hearts silently wishing that some one would speak to them about this supreme question. Perhaps some one is wishing that you would speak that word, and wondering why you do not, in view of the fact that you profess to believe that every man needs Christ. And the Master is waiting at the door of that heart to have His place in that life, saying: "Inasmuch as ye do it unto one of the least of Mine, ye do it unto Me." "He that winneth souls is wise." May God help us to do it!

XI

MARKS OF MANHOOD

VII. The Spirit of Strength Through Hardships

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, in his book "Mosses from an Old Manse," pictures all mankind as suddenly swept from the earth, and a new race coming to see the ruins that are left. The strangers are impressed most painfully by the fact that some lived in great wealth, while many lived in miserable poverty, and they are much perplexed about the unequal conditions of men, and the consequent apparent injustice in human life. Many in our day feel this. All thoughtful souls have been distressed through the centuries because of these very facts. Plato wrote his "Republic," More wrote his "Utopia," and Bellamy wrote his "Looking Backward," in order, in each case, to picture what they deemed an ideal

state of society, where these inequalities no longer existed. It is true, and should be emphasized, that the conditions of the masses of the people are better in Christian lands than in others; and yet among us they are far from equitable.

What are the causes of these differences? There are at least three. First, there is a difference between men in enterprise, in energy and ability, leading to inevitable differences in conditions. Second, the selfishness of some men, leading them to be indifferent to the needs of their fellows, if only they themselves may prosper, results in differences which at times become painfully unjust. Third, there are misfortunes through sickness, or some calamity, which involve some in ruin, while others escape.

There are at least two reasons for the unhappiness of men as a result of these differences. First, many have an utterly wrong idea of the true values of life, and imagine that happiness comes as a result of having. They measure life in money values, and suppose they can buy happi-

ness, if only they have enough gold. And with such the fact that they have not as much money as others is the chief occasion for their misery. In the second place, this unhappy state of feeling is fostered by Christians who are so superficial as to draw social lines according to money, or other than character standards. Let this shoddy element in society, based on false standards, fall, and three-fourths of the discontent now existing would disappear.

The teachings of Jesus Christ are very clear upon the subject. In various utterances He condemned the undue love of money, the indulgence of self, man's injustice to his fellows, and man's indifference to the needs of his neighbour. All these evils Christ unsparingly condemned, and the Christian pulpit must continue to do so. But let us note well the fact that when Christ comes to a philosophy of life, He has no word of comfort for any one who is not a Christian. When a man who is not a Christian complains that the world is out of joint, he is certainly right so far as he himself is concerned. Outside of Christ

there is no light on the real problem of life. But for every true Christian Christ has light upon this subject of the differences existing in the earthly positions and conditions of men.

Christ spake three parables bearing upon the subject, which might be called parables of recompense. The first followed the account of the rich young man who came to Christ asking what he must do to obtain eternal life, to whom Christ said that he should go and sell all he had, and come and follow Him. The young man went sadly away at this suggestion, for he had great riches.

Then Peter said: "Lo, we have left all and followed Thee: what then shall we have?" Christ assured him that they should not lose by their action, but warned them against the bargaining spirit. This is the point in the first parable, where each man received a penny for his labour, though working for different periods of time through the day. The teaching here is not that all have the same reward. By no means! It points to the motive of the

labourer in his service. One hour of service for Christ in the right spirit is more in His sight than a day of service in a bargaining spirit, asking what we will get for it. There is a point to be noted here. We assume to judge how much we should have by what others receive. That is to say, we assume that we deserve as much as others. But we are not the judges of that. God alone determines what we shall receive. Who of us would dare to assert that he deserves more than he receives from God?

This leads us to the teaching of the second parable. The point here is that people have different abilities. If the five-talent man should make five talents more, does he not deserve them? And if the two-talent man should make two more, does he not deserve them? He does not deserve five talents. But some one says: "Just there is the rub! Why are there some five-talent men? and some two? and some with only one? Just there is the injustice!"

But wait! There is a third parable,

which teaches that fidelity in service makes a difference in rewards. In this parable all start alike; but one makes ten, another five, and another one or none, according to his fidelity. Now the point is that fidelity inspired by the right motive develops ability, while neglect involves inevitable loss. In the sight of God success is determined, not so much by how much we do, as by the spirit of fidelity in which we do our work. God does not require five talents of the two-talent man; but He does require two talents. Just here is where the justice of God touches this whole problem. The measure of man's gifts is the measure of his responsibility to God.

In considering this subject we are liable to forget the great teaching of all three parables, namely that we must give account to God for the way in which we use our powers and possessions. God balances gifts and duties. God balances talents and obligations. God considers these three things: motives, fidelity, and ability. If we actually realized that we must inevitably be judged by these, we would not be so

eager for more gifts, since they would mean greater responsibility before God.

In the Sermon on the Mount Christ points out another fact of great importance in our study, namely, that, as a rule, a man will secure that which he determines to have. There will be exceptions, but there will be a point of approach to the desired object, and energy, ambition, consecration, purpose, and effort will tend to realize for the individual that which he seeks. "He shall have his reward." But the fact to be noted just here with full appreciation is that every man, who would secure any desired object, must meet the conditions essential to the attainment. One man may set his heart upon being a physical giant. He knows there are conditions which he must meet in order to attain his ambition, and he meets them with fidelity. He has his reward. True, he may be an ignoramus intellectually, or a reprobate morally, or without much money; but he has his reward. Another man may determine to amass wealth, and he meets the conditions involved. He has his re-

ward. True, he may be a consumptive physically, and without moral character; but he has his reward. Still another man may aspire to intellectual mastery of the world's thought, and he meets the conditions necessary to attain to his ambition. He has his reward. True again that he may not achieve in the other realms of life; but he has not been seeking success there.

In the midst of men with such ambitions we will find one whose whole soul is concentrated upon the purpose and prayer to seek salvation in Jesus Christ and growth into a victorious manhood in the realm of character and spiritual realities. And verily he shall have his reward. True once more that he may not have much money, or physical health, or great knowledge of the contents of many books; but he has not placed any of these things first in his life. Surely we begin to see clearly the bearing of all this! Men will see a wicked man becoming rich and enjoying the pleasures of the flesh, while across the way lives a poor Christian suffering

physical pain, and they ask: "How can God be good, and allow such a state of affairs?" Even some Christians in the midst of such contrasts ask if after all the Christian life really pays.

But such sentiments betray utter confusion concerning the problem of human life at the point of building character. God never promises rewards in any sphere, if the conditions of success in that sphere are not met. It would be exactly as reasonable to expect that a man who has met the conditions in the realm of money, and has massed a fortune in gold, should therefore receive the salvation of his soul at the hand of God, as to expect that because a man has secured the salvation of his soul, therefore God shall reward him with money. It may be that some men will meet the conditions in all of these spheres to some extent, and have more or less of the rewards of their fidelity in all of them; but whenever this is true, it is not for any other reason than that the conditions have been met, and the man reaps the rewards of his own fidelity, or the fidelity of some one

whose treasures of gold or character have come down to him.

But our study goes deeper still. Whenever a Christian is guilty of asking if it pays to have Jesus Christ in the life, because of the presence of poverty, or sorrow, or hardships, it means that he has never realized the priceless value of God's gift in Jesus Christ. Hear the Master sending His message to the members of the Church at Smyrna: "I know thy works, and thy tribulations, and thy poverty; but thou art rich!" What a different message was sent to the man who planned to tear down his barns and build greater: "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. Then whose shall all these things be?" How significant in this connection is the message of Christ sent to Saul of Tarsus at the time of his conversion: "I will show him what great things he must suffer for My name's sake." And all through his Christian life the Apostle Paul suffered as few men have suffered; yet how Paul would have pitied the man who would

have suggested that he should envy the rich their gold, or the politicians their trade, or any man anything as compared with the unspeakable gift of God in Jesus Christ which was his inexpressible joy. Paul had learned that a victorious character in righteousness made every other experience of the earthly life but a passing temporary thing, not to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed in all who live forever in the risen Lord.

Sometimes we pity the rich man who neglects his eternal welfare ; but should we not pity the Christian even more who talks and acts as if the life of the follower of Christ did not pay unless he had also the things of the earthly life in abundance? Christ points out the weak place in all such people. They want to be seen of men. They love the praise of men more than the praise of God. But the meaning of this life is found in attaining unto our right relation to the living God, to know whom is eternal life. Let men realize the value of God's gift in Jesus Christ, and then realize the tremendous responsibility

before God that accompanies wealth and station, and then rate men by the one true standard of character, and every true child of God will look upon the millionaire without a thought of envy, and will only emulate the Christlike spirit in other men.

The vital question therefore is, Have you received God's unspeakable gift of salvation in Jesus Christ? If not, be assured that your life problem will never be solved outside of Him. But having Christ in very truth, the light will shine for you upon every problem, will shine through every shadow, will shine into every sorrow, will shine about every burden, will shine upon the way everlasting which grows bright and brighter unto the perfect day. For all such victorious ones there will be a place among those "who have come up out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb!"

XII

MARKS OF MANHOOD

VIII. The Spirit of the Saint

WE have reached the highest level of Christian experience. We were scarcely ready for this before. It is too true that not very many Christians are ever ready for this level of loyalty and privilege. A pastor was once preaching on the intense consecration of the Apostle Paul. A few days later one of the members of the church met him and said: "Doctor, I want to say a word to you. I want to be a Christian. I think I am a Christian. But I have no intention of being the kind of a Christian that Paul was." He was candid in any case. Evidently the message had struck home. And evidently he had deliberately surrendered to the enemy at some point this side of a full consecration. As compared with the average church-member that he knew, he was doing very well; but as com-

pared with the Apostle Paul, he was not counting much for the cause of Christ.

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, and spoke of their calling to be saints, he had heard of a condition of compromise in the Christian Church there which was painful to consider. He called them "carnal," "babes in Christ." There was no manifest maturity in their Christian growth, no victorious strength of consecration to the highest things. They were on very low levels of fellowship with God, and were satisfied with very low standards of Christian living among men. Could we not duplicate that Corinthian Church in our day? We too are "called to be saints."

God's blessings are like the fruit of a great tree. He has placed the fruit there and made it available for men. When we come to ask Him for a blessing, He replies: "Before you called, I had answered. Go help yourselves. The fruit is yours for the taking. Appropriate it." Some of this fruit is blown to the ground by the winds of heaven, and every passer-by may pick it up. Some of these stoop

down in the act, and never look up to the Giver. Such are the blessings which God "gives to the just and the unjust" alike. Some of the fruit hangs low upon the tree and may be had with very slight reaching, in which a slight looking up is involved. These are blessings in the realm of common grace. Higher up is more precious fruit, to secure which we must climb somewhat. This is the realm of the beginning of Christian effort into which we may enter. But there are various higher places where the more precious fruit is to be had, and for each of these blessings we must climb with earnest purpose to secure the gift of God, laying aside "every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us." As we have said, very few Christians attain to these high places of privilege and power, power with God for men, and power with men for God. The explanation is found in that reference to "every weight." There are many things in the life of Christians that may not perhaps be called sins, but they are weights, hindrances to the complete surrender necessary to the fullest con-

secration of which the Christian is capable by the grace of God.

It is at this point that we have to note the first mark of the saint, namely, *separation unto God.* Those are striking words which Moses spake to the sons of Levi, as they betrayed the failure to honour the position to which they had been called: "Seemeth it but a small thing unto you that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you near unto Himself?" How profound is this thought which evidently goes far to explain the wonderful life of Moses himself. The God of Israel, the one true God, had called him, in order to bring Moses near unto Himself, in order to separate him for his great life-work. This is the climax of human living, to be brought near to God. If men believed it, the problem of separation would have new light upon it. It is not so much being separated from, as separated unto. A small boy ran into the house clutching a handful of worms that he had extracted from a rubbish pile in the back-yard. His older sister, horrified at the

sight, insisted that he should throw them away. But the boy counted them his dearest treasures, and would not part with them. The father saw the situation, and turning to his desk drew therefrom a painted new rubber ball, calling: "My son, see what father has for you!" Instantly the worms were discarded, and the little hands were stretched out eagerly for the new and better prize. But attention was called to the dirty hands, soiled by the inferior things so prized for the moment. It would never do to touch the new gift with such hands. Away ran the boy to be cleansed, and then came for the more worthy possession. Is not that just the picture of thousands of Christian men and women who look longingly at some earthly treasures, from which they are being separated, because they have not yet caught a vision of the priceless blessings in Christ Jesus from whom they are being separated?

This was the great thought in the mind of the apostle when he said, "God separated me unto Himself." The brilliant young Jew, sitting at the feet of Gamaliel,

with wealth and station and great promise for the future, counted all that, from which he had been separated, as refuse, so that he might know Christ, to whom he had been separated, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings. Down in that Roman prison, a beggar in rags, receiving alms from his beloved Philippians, the world of his time counted him a miserable failure, a man who had thrown away his opportunities to rise in the world. But we of to-day, measuring the true values of manhood, realize what a magnificent success he was, because he appreciated the fact that the things from which he was being separated were not worthy to be mentioned together with the life to which he had been separated.

This suggests the second mark of the life of the saint, namely, *steadfastness.* The secret of this grace is in this very appreciation of which we have just spoken. When a man realizes the superior value of the new life in Christ, there is no danger of the good becoming the enemy of the best. There is none of that vacillating of the

soul that is divided in allegiance between the things of the flesh and the things of the spirit. We are all human, and our allegiance is not perfect; yet it may be so true as to prove that the generic choice of the soul is forever fixed upon Jesus Christ. We speak of being "true as the needle to the pole." The phrase has come to signify a splendid fidelity, and worthily so. Yet have you ever watched the needle for a while? If so, you will see that it is actually true to the pole for about a second of time. Then it begins to waver, distracted continually by influences from every side. Yet it returns to the pole, and returns again and again, and as you watch this recurrence, it becomes apparent that the needle is possessed of some quality that fixes its allegiance to the pole so fully that there is no room for doubt about it in any man's mind. Though not absolutely perfect in its allegiance, yet if you want to find the pole, the needle will prove to be your sufficient guide. And this may be true of the Christian. Who of us will question that this ought to be true of us?

We are to be His witnesses, and any man wishing to know how to find Christ has a right to expect that he cannot fail to find the Saviour through our fidelity as His follower.

Paul pleads with those Corinthians to be "steadfast, immovable," and he suggests the surest way to develop the grace of steadfastness, namely by "always abounding in the work of the Lord." The separated life is never meant to be the withdrawal of the recluse from the busy world. Once the hermits supposed so; but it soon became evident that such was not the secret of victory. We will never win the battle by running away from it. We must be in the thick of it. But we are to be in the world and not of it, even as our Lord was in it but not of it. We think of Joseph in Egypt, of Daniel in Babylon, and of Paul in Rome, true children of God, steadfast souls, held by the realization that they had been separated unto God. They did not say: "When we are in Rome we must do as the Romans do"; but they purposed that they would not defile them-

selves by any compromise, for they were children of light.

Must we not make this grace one of the objects of our prayer, with a greater concern for strength to be faithful in its expression? Too many of us are as fickle as the weathercock, uncertain in our allegiance. God once said of a man: "I know that I can trust him!" Think of it! Could our Lord be certain that He can count upon us? We read that the great title which is to be given to Him at the last will be "The Faithful and the True." All of our hope rests in that fact about Him. In so far as we realize an increase of the same fidelity, He will be glorified in us.

There is a third mark of the saint. It is *the spirit of song* running through the life of the Christian, whatever there may be of shadows or burdens. It is the spirit which spells disappointment with a capital H, making it "His appointment," and quietly waiting in confidence for Him to make His will plain, in the certainty that His way is the best way, and that some day we shall

realize that it has been, all along, the way everlasting which grows bright and brighter unto the perfect day. It is explained by the inspiration caught from the message of the Master, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world!"

Song means praise and victory. The Master's triumph already won is the guarantee of the ultimate triumph of His cause in the earth. When one in the midst of a struggle is certain of the outcome, he will never entertain the idea of surrender, no matter how fiercely the battle may rage. The spirit of confidence is a priceless inspiration to the soldier. The certainty that our labour will not be in vain in the Lord brings unfailing encouragement to the heart in the midst of service. The saint knows a joy that runs deeper than sorrow, so that even from a Roman prison he can write: "Rejoice in the Lord, and again I say rejoice!" Here is the secret. The joy of the soul is the Lord Himself. He satisfies. And the life of the saint who has learned to praise Him in all things is

being prepared for the experience of the redeemed in heaven. Nay, our citizenship is already in the heavenlies, and we have already begun here the endless life of praise.

There, doubtless, we shall find a larger and more blessed service, and a wondrous growth in knowledge and fellowship with God; yet song will throb in it all and crown it all. Then we shall fully know the measure of manhood and its meaning as well. There the marred characters shall be renewed in the whole life after the likeness of the glorified Christ. And all the full flower of the marks of true manhood will but reflect His glory in the day when He makes up His jewels. It is not enough to dream of crowning Him then as Lord of all, or of being crowned by Him then as sharing His throne with Him forever. For He teaches us plainly that as we crown Him here and now, He will crown us there. The glory waits. Shall we not enter it now? Shall we not pray with sincerity to be henceforth separated unto God?

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